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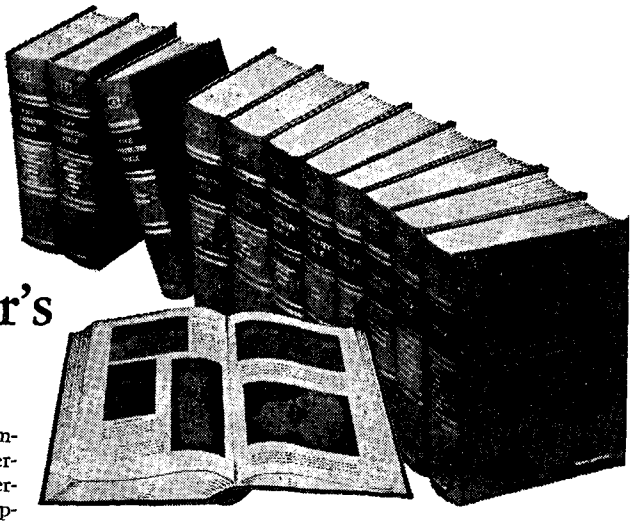

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If You Don't Mind My Saying So. . . . . .

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

James Boswell believed that life had no value unless you kept a diary. "I should live no more than I can record," he wrote, "as one should have no more corn growing than one can get in." For him making a record was neither an amusement nor a means toward an end but the only meaningful portion of life. Other men (Johnson, notoriously) might write to live; Boswell lived to write, and one may guess that Samuel Pepys felt much the same. Marcel Proust, of course, elaborately defended his similar conviction—that the conscious experience of living is the only thing worth living for and that one cannot fully grasp an experience except in retrospect.

Perhaps all great diarists are alike in this, and although their attitude strikes most of us as odd, I wonder if it should? That young men spend their lives anticipating the future, old men in remembering the past, is a platitude. But I don't see why the first should generally be regarded as so much more satisfactory than the second. After all neither the past nor the future is present, and to that extent both are shadowy. And at least the past did happen, while the anticipated future may not—and probably won't.

Why then can't most of us, like Boswell and Proust, take more pleasure in saying with Horace and Dryden, "What has been has been and I have had my hour," than in dreaming of a future that will never come. Is it because, as Johnson said, "The natural progress of the human mind is not from pleasure to pleasure but from hope to hope"? Now that my meridian is receding farther and farther into the past, I will be in a better and better position to examine the phenomenon. To tell the truth I began quite a few years ago.

At least one thing is clear. We couldn't find either our own past or our own future any more gratifying than other people's unless we were convinced that the "I" to whom remembered things happened and to whom an anticipated future belongs actually is continuous with the "I" of the moment. Yet a denial that any such unified and persistent persona does exist is as old as Heraclitus and is one of the many popular assumptions upon which doubts are persistently cast by both modern fiction with its stream of consciousness and psychology with its tendency to think of motive and character as a shifting configuration of stimuli and conditioning factors so that man becomes merely the sum of temporary happenings rather than a persisting "I" to whom external things happen. It used to be simple to say that "the self" is the soul and as such persists not only through time but through eternity also. But many theologians have given up "the soul" in that sense, and the philosopher is faced with the problem of what is left of the "I" after "the soul" has ceased to have a definable meaning.

Not very many years ago when I was giving some lectures on modern drama, I devoted one of them to "the dissolution of the ego," with Pirandello obviously the playwright most persistently concerned with this theme, and Proust as a contemporary novelist almost equally obsessed by the

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conviction that our sense of being the same person from year to year is delusion. John Doe, so they both say, may be a label supposed to refer to some continuous entity which it follows from birth certificate to tombstone, but that entity is only a fiction.

Hume says somewhere that introspection has revealed to him only a series of sensations, never any continuous "I." Bertrand Russell ridiculed Descartes's "I think therefore I am" for naïvely assuming a nonexistent ego when even Descartes himself was no more than a series of events. And just the other day I came across a quotation attributed to Buddha which says precisely the same thing. "There is this or that passing idea, this or that transitory emotion, this or that image, but no organized whole behind them which can be called an ego." Perhaps I am merely a Dr. Johnson refuting Berkeley by kicking a stone, but I wager that although Buddha may have been indifferent in the face of death, both Hume and Russell have found it impossible to contemplate with complete detachment the ending of that series of events to which we stupidly give their names. If Proust really believed that he was not the same person who wept when his mother delayed kissing him goodnight, then I fail to see why he should have found his own past any more interesting or vivid than that of others, and I suggest (as cross-examining lawyers say) that all the volumes of *Remembrance of Things Past* are really an attempt to convince himself of something Bergson had taught him to doubt —namely, that Marcel Proust was an entity, not a series of disparate events.

An ancient Greek joke turned upon the case of a wrongdoer who protests that he should not be punished today for what he did yesterday because, as Heraclitus had demonstrated, it is not the same he. At the time of my drama lectures I was most interested in pointing out that this joke is no joke since all classical, Christian and, indeed, all rationalist ethics depend upon the assumption that there is a persistent "he" to get his just desserts and possibly to be made a better man tomorrow. Hence, I argued, it seems that if the persona is indeed a fiction, it is a necessary one. I was not able, however, to say much in its defense beyond remarking that in ordinary life we obviously live by it, as when, for instance, we say of someone, "that is not worthy of him," or, slangily, "be yourself," both of which locutions imply that, although men are often inconsistent, there is nevertheless some self against which the inconsistency of an act or an attitude can be measured. Neither would mean anything at all if some individuality did not persist.

Just the other day some reference to Freud and the "pleasure principle" started me thinking about the whole problem again, and I came up with what seemed to me a fresh proof that the persisting ego is indeed a reality, not a fiction. Even the "pleasure principle," although supposedly something that the mature individual must get beyond, could affect no one unless the "I" at this moment were the same "I" who is to get some pleasure in the next moment, and we could not get beyond the "pleasure principle" if we did not believe that the "I" who sacrifices the present for the future is the same one who will reap the future benefit. Heraclitus himself would have been confounded unless he was prepared to admit that a future threat to someone else would disturb him as deeply as the same threat to himself. With the possible exception of a few saints, there is not, and there never has been, anyone whose concern for others was precisely the same as his concern for himself. Unless we were sure of the fact that there is some continuing reality in us, we would be no more disturbed to be told that we must die tomorrow than we are by the knowledge that many somebodies certainly will die today, and every day thereafter.

If the future of everyone else actually did concern us as much as our own, then we would all be either completely indifferent to everything except the moment, or we would have achieved that perfect selflessness that is sometimes presented as an ideal. But if we really did achieve this state, life would be intolerable because we should be daily dying a thousand deaths and suffering ten thousand agonies. That the starv-

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ing millions of Asia and the tortured victims of the concentration camps are relatively unreal to us is, in one way, a blessing. Egotism, in the sense that we are aware of a persisting persona and that therefore its future is somehow of more concern to us than the future of others, is necessary if human existence is to be tolerable.

One of my Tucson friends is an electrical engineer now cooperating with a biologist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology on some novel experiments. These involve the use of tiny electrodes inserted into the brain of a frog, and the purpose is to discover what happens in an individual nerve cell when it receives and helps react to an external stimulus. They are discovering wonderful and surprising things, but I judge after asking some questions that these investigators (unlike some working in similar fields) are well aware of the fact that if you expect in some such way to understand what the connection is between a biochemical process and a conscious sensation of color, or sound or smell—to say nothing of thought—you never get even close to realizing your expectations. All that you actually succeed in doing is to describe in fuller and finer detail the processes that accompany sensations. So far as an ultimate explanation is concerned, you are following a will-o'-the-wisp. It is still impossible to imagine what kind of connection there could be between a physical fact and consciousness. The two remain discontinuous universes between which no bridge can be built. We can never be sure, even, that the one world receives correct reports from the other. It may be that the sense and the consciousness that seem to interpret this external world give a totally false picture of it. Perhaps the material eludes the consciousness, perhaps the consciousness invents the material. When I think my consciousness makes me aware of something outside myself, it is only an assumption that this something is really there. Perhaps I am only wrapped in a dream, and in either case only the awareness (or dream) is indisputably real.

If, as I feel sure, the solipsist cannot be refuted in the laboratory, neither, I think, can the nature of the persona be revealed there, although one kind of scientist will of course insist that the laboratory does, on the contrary, make perfectly clear the limited sense in which the organism that begins in the womb and ends in the grave is continuously one thing. That one thing, he will say, is simply the soma which the infinitely complex mechanisms of heredity have made unique and which the stimuli that it happens to have received have modified. But, even assuming the accuracy of this statement as far as it concerns physiological facts, it does not explain why we care more about what will happen to us tomorrow than we do about what will happen to someone else, and it cannot explain that, because it cannot explain the always and perhaps eternally inconceivable connection between physical fact and consciousness.

What we do know with special urgency is that we do care what happens to us tomorrow and do feel that what happened to us yesterday happened to us and not to someone else. Having called upon science, metaphysics and theology to explain and justify both this conviction and the complementary conviction that our consciousness is not the only reality in the universe, and having got no answer from any of them, we are compelled to fall back upon Santayana's Animal Faith. Ultimately, it is by that which we live and act. Even if it deludes us with appearances while science gives us facts, we can only reply that so far as the experiences of living are concerned, appearances are realer than reality. In fact it may be that the concept of an eternal life for the soul became so widely accepted in so many religions partly because man could not imagine that the most indisputable reality he knew—namely, his own enduring self—could cease to exist.

Those who despise both "the literary mind" and "the metaphysical mind" are fond of pointing out that great writers and great thinkers have a way of disagreeing so completely with others equally great that where one sees white, the other sees black.

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That distinguished writers and thinkers do indeed do just that was brought to mind while I was writing this very piece and happened to come across a recent essay by François Mauriac where (the lame translation is my own) he writes: "When I observed the other evening a little group of friends reunited about the table of Francis Poulenc I was struck, as I often am, by the fact that human beings change hardly at all. What they were at the beginning is what I find them later and what they remain to the end. . . . Whenever I meet again those whom I have known in the past and see again only after a long interval, I am struck by the immovable, immutable presence of something which duration does not change and which is not concerned with time."

Obviously this is not only a flat contradiction of the principal thesis expounded in many volumes by Mauriac's contemporary, Marcel Proust. It is also, by implication, a denial of what Buddha, Hume, Russell and many other metaphysicians have proved to their own satisfaction. How different this is, say many, from what one finds among scientists who are almost always in substantial agreement with one another! But the truth is that even when a consensus does exist at a given time, what that consensus agrees upon changes from decade to decade as completely as do metaphysical or literary opinions.

Consider the case of what might be called the orthodox eschatology of science. Just about the time when I was first reading Proust, Sir James Jeans (along with some others) was making the Second Law of Thermodynamics as fashionable a topic of intellectual conversation as "alienation" is today, and we all took it as a proved fact that increasing entropy would inevitably extinguish all life in a universe where no difference in temperature between one place and another could exist. Yet Jeans was hardly safe in his grave when his biographer, the late Professor E. Milne, ended his book with a beautiful British understatement: ". . . I am now convinced that an unconditional prediction of a heat-death for the universe is an over-statement." That was published in 1952, and now we are being assured that the real end of our world will be by fire not by ice. I am not quite sure why, but I think the demonstration runs something like this: The white dwarf stars are now supposed to represent a late stage in the life of a sun that has fallen in on itself. Our own little private sun is still in its youth, but someday it will turn into a white dwarf and be so hot that everything on earth will be quickly consumed.

If the literary mind believes incompatible theories simultaneously, the scientific mind accepts them successively, and I am not sure that that is anything to boast about. It was a poet who observed:

> Some say the world will end in fire,
> Some say in ice.

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The Imagination of a Man of Letters

ALFRED KAZIN

FOR more than thirty years, since *Axel's Castle,* Edmund Wilson has been the most satisfactory critic we have, the critic with the most honorable mind, the most independent instincts, the critic with the greatest intellectual passion for mastering all the languages and all the literatures open to his voraciously gifted mind. Yet we honor him not explicitly as a critic, not even as our best critic, but as a writer and a man of imagination, the author of books whose significance to us we equate, above all intellectual elucidation, with aesthetic pleasure, the excitement of an individual style and created form.

We honor as our greatest living man of letters a writer whose habitual form is the magazine article, who has built many of his books on articles, and who when interviewed by admiring and solicitous professors calls himself a journalist. In our period serious criticism seems to have been preempted, so far as intention itself may go, by academic specialists; intellectual research abroad is supported largely by foundations; even the discussion of American manners has been appropriated as a scientific discipline by sociologists. The evasion of specialization, professionalization, institutionalization and even of subsidization, clearly, on the basis of his achievement, marks the uniqueness of Mr. Wilson. Indeed, this occasion is unique because of qualities in Edmund Wilson that are not likely to be duplicated in this generation or the next; unique because so many of us, simply as readers, have been able to recognize his literary achievement.

Since the qualities that we honor in Edmund Wilson are those of independent imagination in a scholar, critic, diarist, autobiogra-

✪ This discussion of the art of intellectual prose by ALFRED KAZIN was the main address at the MacDowell Colony, Peterborough, New Hampshire, on August 16, 1964, when Edmund Wilson was awarded the Edward MacDowell Medal. Mr. Kazin is a member of the Editorial Board of the SCHOLAR and author most recently of *Contemporaries.*

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pher, historian and reporter, I should like to talk about the quality of such imagination in first-rate writers who, even when they occasionally write fiction and light verse, are inevitably thought of under names that do not suggest their personal substance, temperament and inner freedom.

The dual terms of our literary culture—imaginative and intellectual—were laid down at the end of the eighteenth century, with the emergence of utility as an ideal of industrial society. To this the Romantics opposed their faith in the dream, in the resources of the unconscious; the term "imagination" they identified with the invented, the fanciful, the wholly private and even secret resources of the poet who is beleaguered yet autonomous. Yet when we look back at that classical instance of the man of letters as a genius, Samuel Johnson, a writer who dramatically represents in himself both learning and temperament, we can see what it is that for the next two centuries will distinguish from the creative imagination of novelists, dramatists and poets the moral and historical imagination of men whom it is natural to identify with Johnson as proud imaginations among the men of letters—Gibbon, Burke, Coleridge, Hazlitt, Arnold, Emerson, Carlyle, Henry Adams.

Johnson was of course also a dramatist, a writer of edifying tales, and in his severe and biting style, a poet of great penetration and wit. Yet when we read his great preface to his edition of Shakespeare, whom he celebrated as the least affected of poets, the writer with the soundest and most direct observations of "the general nature," we can see that for all Johnson's admiration of Shakespeare's abounding naturalness, he cannot, with his critical insight, disguise from himself Shakespeare's lack of *pietas*, of any intellectual-religious system. And it is Shakespeare's lack, not merely of a belief but of a belief in belief, that explains Johnson's mistrust. For Johnson is not just a classicist who believes that the experience of mankind is summed up in general ideas that must be learned and obeyed; not only a Christian who believes that the creation constitutes a moral order; he is above all, as a practicing writer himself, the very embodiment of the kind of intellectual talent that adores its own abstractions, that is bound up with a belief in purposive-

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ness, that insists on uncovering a pattern and demonstrating a sequence in every subject it takes up.

Johnson complained that Shakespeare sacrifices virtue to convenience, and is more careful to please than to instruct. But in the next century Shakespeare's pleasing never troubled an agnostic and virtuoso of language like Keats. And what Keats was to adore in Shakespeare the ideal and perfect poet—his lack of system, of faith, of consistency, constancy, explicitness, of any need even to be in intellectual agreement with himself from one line to another —was just what had disturbed Johnson. And it was as against another great man of letters, Coleridge, that Keats discovered his own faith in negative capability—which escapes what Keats called the irritable reaching after fact and reason, and is capable of sustaining uncertainties, mysteries, doubts. By opposing Shakespeare to Coleridge, by opposing his own poetic faith to the positiveness of so many great moralists and believers and would-be believers, like Coleridge, who had made themselves sick by trying to account for all experience, Keats guessed the real quality of those who stand apart from pure imaginations like himself. Johnson, for all his positiveness, affirmed his Christianity as if it were the same leap out of fear and trembling that Kierkegaard was to describe in an openly skeptical generation; Johnson's Christianity is finally symbolic of his urgent need, artistic and intellectual, to secure himself in a tradition. And when we ask ourselves what it is about Johnson that explains the peculiar vibrancy of his critical thinking and of his conversation as recorded by Boswell, we recognize a perpetual crisis of intellectual commitment in Johnson—this man feels that he has earned the right to speak and to pronounce on human experience in general, for he is himself so ladened and burdened with general ideas by which he expects to be saved. Johnson the lawgiver at every moment of conversation, the great dogmatist and schoolmaster on all issues and all occasions, is never immodest to himself, for he feels himself to be an instrument of the general truth. And this truth, expressed by tradition, is urgent although heavy, it is all that has saved mankind from its contradictions, its lack of consistency and understanding. The man of letters, in Johnson's eyes, embodies this tradition and elucidates it in his critical observations.

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In our sense of the word Johnson is not "creative"; for he does not believe in creativity. He believes in wisdom, good sense, consistency. The "creative" will now stand, properly, for those who in every instance create the world over again every time they write a book, those who like Balzac and Dickens create in the particular and the actual the attributes of the new society exactly as it is being created physically by factories, railroads, newspapers, big cities. And Johnson would have said that the function of the writer is not to go forward with the age but to stand at the center of human experience. For Johnson the key attribute of the writer would not have been, in our favorite terms, talent or originality, but the sense of inhabiting the imaginative space that we call history, the great memory.

Obviously a deep religious commitment is one way of possessing tradition. And in their different ways Johnson the believer, Coleridge the theologian, Carlyle the secret unbeliever, Nietzsche—in all his thunderings the very type of intellectual pilgrim who cannot live without faith—exemplify this connection. But I have no desire to impose even the shadow of it on so belligerent a rationalist as Edmund Wilson. And it is a fact that for many men of letters, civilization itself, the culture determined by the classical tradition, has the same imaginative value. Gibbon the rationalist identified the lucid and meaningful world with the space occupied by the Roman Empire and the Latin tongue. For him, as for Henry Adams sitting a century later on the same steps of Ara Coeli where Gibbon had mused on the broken unity of the classical world, the sense on every hand of a decline and fall re-created in the cultural pilgrim, and in the pages of his history, a sense of civilization as great a monument to man's transcendent urge as his sense of religion.

In any event, Johnson's faith in tradition now seems more unquestioning to us than does his Christianity. And as opposed to the usual antiquary, pedant, explicator, bookworm, savant, specialist, Johnson excites us by showing what happens when a powerful mind with a vehement sense of his own personality addresses himself to general ideas as total personal experiences. What makes Johnson real to us in Boswell is that he lives passionately, socially

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and comically by his abstractions, his complex intellectual loyalties and moralities. We see in Boswell what follows from a wholly mental existence when all these fine propositions and absolutes become issues at the tea table, in the coffeehouse, in intimacies and quarrels, in tippling and in the street. We can see in Johnson's life what happens when a scholar convinced of the sacredness of learning tries to understand his own emotions, and everybody else's, within this body of learning.

The man who lives in literature recognizes life as literature and constantly turns it back into literature. Henry Adams' friend John La Farge said that Adams' historic sense amounted to "poetry": meaning, I suppose, that in Adams the details of history were so real that they rose to the glow, the perfected love, that we associate with poetry. Johnson's learning—one might as easily say Gibbon's learning or Henry Adams' learning—is imaginative, it lives by imagination, because it represents so eloquent an effort to hold in a single mind the recorded achievements of mankind. A fact can arouse such minds to a whole pattern and sequence of other facts which are felt to be related, and relation in its demon of unity mysteriously satisfies some human craving and expectation. There are scholars who remember minutiae for the pleasure of being minute. At the other end of the creative scale, Shakespeare in his history plays creates a comedy of time, a whirligig in which kings dash across the stage, pursued by usurpers who in the next scene will be pushed off the stage in their turn as well. But to the imagination of the man of letters history is certainly not a comedy, it is the treasure on which his mind lives. And since he is distinguished as a type by his critical temper, his exacting sense of fact, his intense, irritable truthfulness about what he knows and does not know, such a writer stands in a very dramatic personal relation to the world of fact—it is real to him and he feels that he is real to it. Gibbon said that he darted a contemptuous glance at those stately monuments of superstition, meaning Gothic cathedrals; Hazlitt says that when he looked at the sea, it reminded him of all that was intractable to man's revolutionary will; Johnson, of course, kicked the curbstone to show his contempt for Berkeley's philosophical idealism; Emerson said that he dreamed that the world was one great apple, and

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that he ate it; Henry Adams was to make the dynamo at the Paris exposition of 1900 as real as the atom bomb is to us; Edmund Wilson muses over the letters of the Hebrew alphabet as making a long journey in time.

This personal engagement with the world of historic fact distinguishes the born critic and intellectual artist. Henry James said of this type that "to lend himself, to project himself and steep himself, to feel and feel till he understands, and to understand so well that he can say, and to have perception at the pitch of passion and expression as embracing as the air, to be infinitely curious and incorrigibly patient, and yet plastic and inflammable and determinable, patient, stooping to conquer and serving to direct—these are fine chances for an active mind, chances to add the idea of independent beauty to the conception of success."

On the one hand, the past, tradition, all those books that the man of letters will carry around with him wherever he goes and which in every new house he organizes all over again as if by arranging books he were putting himself in order. On the other hand, there is himself. If it were not for himself, he would be a pure scholar, as the saying goes. But of course he is not pure and does not want to be; he is not a nobly disinterested mind modestly editing texts and living for Jonathan Swift or Henry James. He is a writer, often indeed a journalist, as were Johnson and Hazlitt; he has a public and needs a public for intellectual relations as well as economic reasons. He is in fact a writer who depends on scholarship, which means other people's scholarship, often without realizing his debt, so quickly does he assimilate facts necessary to his imagination. And his own voice must reach very far through the arts of exposition and reminiscence, of history and polemic and intellectual analysis.

Keats said that the poet is himself the least poetical of all God's creatures, for he has no identity of his own but is always flowing out into and becoming another body. By somber contrast with the lightness and magic of this quality of pure dramatic imagination, the man of letters is often the heaviest of God's creatures, more rooted to earth, bound to his own voice and his own opinions, heavy with the weight of many books, and above all located and

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locatable with a sense of fatality about his own temperament. No one knows what Shakespeare was like, for he was too many characters in turn; but Johnson knew all too well who he was and we certainly know who he was, one of the world's great characters playing the same character through all of Boswell and Johnson. Johnson lived in the fixed place that was his own mind, and from it, no matter in what tone of voice he put it, he could only say: *I* believe, and *I* think.

In all such work we always know who is speaking. And since this *I* cannot alter or transfer itself, but must describe and analyze rather than become, the art of intellectual prose is a continuous personification of the mind itself in its ideal consistency, rigor, civility and penetration. What delights us in such works as Johnson's *Lives of the Poets,* in Hazlitt's reflections on Shakespeare, in Emerson's *Journals,* in Adams' *Education,* is the visible effort to rise to pure perceptiveness, to put so many things in intellectual order, to establish those relations that definitely satisfy our sense of truth. One recognizes in all such writing the power of argument as an aesthetic ideal, the use of style to define. Unlike scientific or philosophical writing, which takes place as a discussion between people seeking to establish common terms, the argument of literary prose must satisfy the writer himself, for his is a personal model of reality, a created form. The questions he seeks to answer are in form those that he alone has raised. That is why his work is judged by aesthetic norms rather than scientific ones. And perhaps the power of argument that we respond to in such works is oratory in the classic sense—invocation serves in one paragraph to call us to the tradition that the speaker is defending; the close marshaling of arguments in another paragraph impresses us not because they uproot our cherished beliefs, like a page by Hume or Kant, but because of the intensity of style brought to bear on the subject.

In all such writing we attend an exhibition. Criticism is by its nature a public act, a necessity of society, one voice in conversation. There are poets and even novelists who go to their graves with unpublished masterpieces in a drawer; but a critic without an audience is inherently absurd. Johnson's best works were called out of him by economic necessity; Hazlitt gave some of his best

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essays first as lectures to groups of his literary friends and then published them as articles before republishing them in books. One cannot imagine the many first-rate essays in criticism just by American writers, from Poe, Emerson and James up to Mencken, Brooks and Wilson, without certain magazines and the intellectual loyalties of the audience for these magazines. Criticism is so often written for pay, for the moment, for an immediate issue; it is so much, as an activity, connected with fashion and opinion, that it is the greatest possible tribute to the kind of writing we are honoring here today that so much of it, written as journalism, survives as literature. As Cyril Connolly says, the literary journalist gets paid on the head and gets praised on the head. So much of literary journalism is chitchat, gossip, malice, presumption—there are so many people around at all times who think of criticism as a way of establishing their smartness—that the more one thinks of how very good some writers in this form have been, the more impressed one is by the mysterious power of talent to reach the goals that are natural to it, that are compelling to itself alone.

Yet if we remember the weight of tradition and the responsibility for this tradition that the man of letters carries, it follows that in a period of violent and continuous revolutionary explosions, the power of tradition is hard enough to feel as a personal commitment, and even harder is it to use tradition critically. Anyone who has heard classrooms of healthy and understandably science-minded American undergraduates dutifully repeating, without understanding or believing it, that we are the hollow men, alas, our heads stuffed with straw, knows how empty the pedagogical use of "tradition"-minded recent poetry can be. And I suspect that the remarkable body of talent connected with Southern writing is dwindling because the tradition that served Southern writers in the 1930's and early 40's as a criticism of the "new" South, no longer is applicable at all to Southerners driven frantic by the Negro revolution. Tradition as a literary resource is a very delicate and complex matter. The writer who cares about it most will be possesed by it and yet know when to give it up. Where the instinct of continuity is strongest, sensitiveness to the novel situation is often sharpest. And as the sense of tradition becomes rarer

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—it has certainly become less operational—such writers tend to think of themselves as out of touch.

Mr. Wilson, who is one of the glories of our culture, says that when he looks at *Life* magazine, he feels that he is not in the same society at all. Obviously the barbecue pits and the spacemen are more remote than the classical republic that is the central figure drawn in that unique book, *Patriotic Gore*. But if one thing is clear from the increasing disturbance and polarization of American opinion this summer, it is that the people who seemed most at home in this best of all possible worlds are no longer sure of possessing it. The anxious adjustments of conventional opinion are breaking up again, and the incidence of disturbance widens every day. For many Americans, history is a conspiracy against their happiness. At such a moment those who have been made to feel remote by the quality of their culture, may find our society more interesting than they once did. The imagination of the past is occupied with the truth of change—and may read the times with more confidence than those who fell asleep every night before their television sets and are now waking up with a curse.

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Siena, Italia, a Cape Cod

Mary Ellen Johansen

I live in streams of seed and sand,
the house shifts with notes, with
grains shingling off the shore.
Motes in my sunlight beam
in a blaze of receptivity,
picking up from Mother Europe
what Héloïse said to Abélard.
My spirit rises like listening smoke
when the cougar wakes and his
smile shakes bells in the pink air
ten planes from here to where he
picks the brains in dead man's orbit.
When dark falls on all these
tidings we can catch the
night fanning out flat and
ride the long cicada surf so
rumorous of Africa.
But I am interested in
becoming the American
that never was and never will be.

By columns through the heart of God
the horses circle in Sicily,
and the print of their path
joined to that high thrust
makes a shaft in truth.
It is not like putting
a mohole down

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nor building a stockade.
We had glimpses once
of an identity, a little blood fell,
but everyone moved away
or never came.

O the horses: of the Sybarites,
which danced to the flute,
an embarrassment in battle;
or the long train of St. John
that went winding down
to look upon the waters.
Our ponies of the plain
only swept across in wheels
of whitened wind
that circleth continually,
trying to tell.

The westerner almost made it,
sitting cool, riding it out on a rush chair
in the greasy funnel of a tornado,
locus of cattle and grass swirling
as easily around him as the focused
wind round the finger of a child.
But he forgets the pale cliff palaces
where once the women gave their
hair for ropes to let the males
out in a maze of lariats,
and fails to feel the eyes, like Texas,
upon him, watching from the seven cities,
seeing him as crazy Estevan
the Moor staggering up through Mexico

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to the death of an emperor.
Never mind.
The bright red sun is
drawing life from sea to
land through green and gull's
developing cry, over the
paling tower marked
Siena, Italia, a Cape Cod.
My shadow moves before me
like a keyhole in the
panel of light and I unlock
it with one thrust of my
torch while the moon is
unlocking the water in the
tides. There is no American,
and only the motion abides.

© MARY ELLEN JOHANSEN lives in New Canaan, Connecticut. A group of her poems appeared in the Spring, 1962, AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

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Remodeling the Protestant Ministry

ERNEST WERNER

ONE DAY LAST SPRING a colleague's weekly newsletter, of the sort churches mail out, brought me a report of his ministerial activities over two or three weeks. It had been written by a layman for other members of the congregation who had been wondering aloud, "What does the minister do with his time?" This is a fair enough question, since laymen pay his salary, and it becomes a matter of conscience for the minister that his time should be well spent. Outside a few regular meetings and calls, an occasional wedding or funeral, trivial items of office work, and the Sunday service there are few formal demands on his time. Not to have a lively feeling of accountability under the circumstances would be unnatural in a man of conscience, let alone of common sense, and when the layman-employer voices his curiosity about the minister's weekly schedule, it must fall on his eardrums alarmingly.

"He's busy," the article said, and gave a long list of his doings to prove it, encouraging a pragmatic, businesslike view of the ministry. Reassured of his efficiency, the laity murmur back, "He's busy," thus pronouncing the favorite ritual absolution of our time. What more can you ask of a man besides a full calendar, a variety of undertakings, and a steady pace? The article finished by asking, tongue in cheek, if anyone cared to exchange jobs with the minister after seeing his schedule. It was a good-humored question and probably meant in a friendly spirit, but disturbing for the assumption it betrayed, if only indirectly. Here is a layman putting the ministry up for grabs. Anyone might do it, except for being put off by the longish, if tenuous schedule. I suppose this is the price of being a Protestant. I can't imagine a Jew asking a question like that, because the rabbi is a scholar, and his years of poring over

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Holy Writ have given him an advantage in that respect over the furniture salesman. And what Catholic layman, not being qualified to dispense the sacraments, would dream of asking it about his priest?

As a clergyman of this man's denomination, I found myself resenting the whole thing. This periodical recertification of the profession by people who cannot see very far into it, and who cannot grasp its inner aims and difficulties, is bad enough. But worse, and nearer the heart of it, I resent the failure of laymen and ministers alike to perceive that this everlasting busyness will never cure the slackness of the ministry, never curb the distractions that have condemned it recently to mediocre achievements. If the minister is only friendly and obliging, people will accept his show of busyness without asking what it is all *for,* and how effective it is, because effectiveness implies a ministry that is well-conceived and definite, and faithfully followed up. People do not know their own minds in the matter. They do not stop to reflect that it is only after his function has become unintelligible or has lost its felt, half-unconscious persuasiveness that anyone will think to ask what the minister does with (all) his time. The impatient habit of always looking to him for results, as if an investment were lagging, forgets the simple truth that in matters of intangible worth, effectiveness has its own timetable and its own obscure ways, but that it cannot be drummed up by all the well-meant, commonplace energies in the world. This is the nature of spiritual things, that is, of the higher pursuits on which men set their hearts. Effectiveness here has nothing to do with a tempo of busyness and a friendly manner, although friendliness may be a good thing, and in a religion sealed by saints and martyrs, it must have a dubious connection with success, unless the Kingdom has somehow already arrived.

But one can see that the layman's readiness to estimate the ministry by the standards that work in business and sales is an inheritance he comes by properly, both as an American and as a Protestant. Much of our success-mindedness in religion originated in the days of soul-winning when the evangelist measured his worth by the number of people he had shepherded through the crisis of

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conversion, after first bringing it on. It is not hard to discover that this impulse, now fortified by the model of the enterprising businessman, survives in the expectation that the minister must succeed and the congregation prosper, so that its attendance keeps pace with its rising budget. The minister's friendliness and go-getter energy takes the place of a faded evangelistic zeal.

Historically, this unusual closeness to the popular mood, its constant tendency to merge and be lost in it, is one of the themes of American religion. Without that long companionship, much that we now take for granted, from the jukebox religious ditty to the Billy Graham Pavilion at the World's Fair, would be hard to account for. From the time of the first Great Awakening, preachers have gone out after the people and have sought a deliberate nearness with them, emotionally and intellectually. Often they were common, uneducated people like the people they won. Furthermore, American clergymen have had to rely directly on their congregations for their livelihood, not on the state, so that the closeness between religion and the people was early written in our destiny. From a religious viewpoint, it has become a benign closeness, compared with the days of terrorized converts and chastened sinners. It comes as no surprise to learn that Charles G. Finney was the last evangelist with a socially radical doctrine, while the next prominent preacher in that line, Dwight L. Moody, began as a successful businessman, remained a layman, and never threatened the complacency of the business community which helped to finance his campaigns. These things make the snappy success of the energetic Norman Vincent Peale more intelligible; and the publicity campaigns of the flashy Billy Graham, who is not the first evangelist to use them, fit into this background and clearly belong there. How times have changed since the days of that lofty Puritan, Jonathan Edwards! And what might *he* be like if he were living today? I, for one, find it hard to imagine his being the sort of popular minister who is rewarded when a movie is made of his life—on the basis of an authorized biography.

But nearness is one thing, and our diffusely busy and friendly ministries are something else again, and one-sided. There is no doubt that we have gifted speakers in the ministry, and that some

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of these men use the old biblical rhetoric resoundingly, or add it to a rhetoric of their own, but this is far from saying that we see any prophetic distance in our ministers, or that we could sincerely praise them for elevation and profundity. Vision and intellectual power are not qualities we associate with Protestant ministers, a situation that would be bad enough at the best of times, but is now, when religion is outdistanced in every direction, disastrous. We are poised on the rim of a secular and ecumenical age. Our Western world has shrunk to an almost parochial place in history, while our daily intercourse with strange peoples and their ways must eventually work its contrast with our heritage of Christianity. This has already been happening among visionaries and individualists for some hundreds of years, and it would be too obvious to say so if I were not emphasizing my belief that this must happen to an extent we have not yet dared to dream. It is only people of intellectual profundity who can grasp this world and see far enough into it to grope their way, leading others. It is something that must be done, by one class of leaders if not by another. Yet the opportunity finds Protestant ministers too much distracted to think, let alone to lead.

How has it all come about? In part, at least, by the willingness of preachers to adapt their ministries to the worldly ways of Protestants, which also accounts for the vigor and usefulness of the ministry. Worldliness is an important factor. "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" is a text that has probably inspired few recent sermons. Protestantism from its beginning has had a tendency to become secular, and possibly eventually to vanish into worldliness. Certainly it is not alone in this, for all religions manage to make their peace with a world that their founders have overcome, but Protestantism has a tendency to disappear into the world without quite ceasing to exist. Its iconoclasm and its abstract, invisible spirituality probably impel it in this direction. You will hear Protestants who have lapsed from church-going and have become vague in their beliefs moralistically berating Roman Catholics for sinning the night before, or after, confession, which absolves them from guilt so conveniently, to a Protestant conscience. But you will not find

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among these Protestants, and hardly among others more church-minded, the same easy acceptance of religion that Catholics achieve. Its visible tokens, sacrament and symbol, have become stumbling blocks. Moral strenuousness tends to displace the religion of Protestants. Yet the minister is eager to be useful to his flock, however irreligious and moralistic they become. His fear, I think, is one of losing his usefulness, becoming superfluous. It is not so much the anxiety of being out of work as of being committed to a calling that has lost its place, lost the *reason* for its place. Ministers find themselves ministering to a flock with whom they do not share a sacred ritual, to speak of, or a religious vocabulary that they can use without mild or painful embarrassment. By friendliness, then, and helpful improvisations, they make themselves useful.

That this attitude is a fertile source of distractions will become clearer if we remember that "Protestant" is a name that has been stretched to include people of no real religious identity. Practically everyone who isn't a Catholic or a Jew is considered a Protestant, including those unaffiliated with any church who are not above finagling weddings and funerals conducted by ministers. Since for many Protestants the best expression of their faith is activity in the community, the name also covers the motives behind a scattering into civic causes, so that from the library board to the commission on human relations appeals will reach the minister. Besides, he is vaguely supposed to be keeping a watchful eye on things, and people seem reassured to hear his droning invocations and benedictions at dinners kicking off the community chest drive.

Asking him to resist these random appeals is asking a great deal more than one supposes. In the first place he does not want to be aloof or even give that appearance. It has become instinctive with him to believe that his benefactors and employers are those who use him, and that they mustn't be disappointed. There is also the matter of moral courage in challenging such an agreeable consensus, for even if he were convinced that these distractions were a bother, it would be asking a lot to expect him to disturb the basis of his professional usefulness. I think no other profession

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resembles the ministry in the extent to which it has come to depend on public goodwill, even more than on competence. Admittedly, both things are necessary in all professions. The doctor has to satisfy his patients, but he sets his own office hours and writes his own prescriptions. The lawyer must satisfy his client, but he determines his own fee. Ministers have hardly a voice in controlling their profession, which has become what people want it to be, the sum of the things they ask of it. If anyone defies these expectations, he threatens the very grounds of his usefulness. No other professional is quite so eager as he to please. ("Let's check on our telephone habits," suggests a minister's handbook. "Do you answer the telephone before the third ring?")

Although some men make important careers of this broad utility, and do it with zest, it is at bottom a passive thing. Initiative in the ministry is confined to doing what other ministers do, only more so. An outstanding minister is someone whose energies happen to flow in the direction of popular usefulness. He will be a speaker in demand at service clubs and local colleges. He will be summoned from his midnight sleep by one of the many quarreling families that have come to depend on his mediation. He will shepherd his congregation through a *larger* building program. In his sphere he might become a powerful man, but what is his sphere? Convention. There is no innovation in this ministry, no discovery, and only a workaday intelligence, but more than that, there is no longer an opportunity for these higher gifts of insight and renewal. The outstanding minister is content to exploit the spiritual deposit of the past, leaving it up to other men to shape contemporary spirituality. He at best identifies himself with trends that others have set in motion (integration is an example) or becomes a retailer of other men's ideas.

Passivity shows up also in the failures, men of broken morale, conquered by futility, who cannot summon up the energy to go on responding in the usual way. These will stay behind in smaller churches, endlessly puttering or taking up hobbies to fill the time. If this were a retreat into concentrated study or into prayer and meditation, it would still be a ministry and something might come of it, but I have found only one man who has refused an ordinary

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ministry in order to read his way, via the great books, into an original comprehension of the age. Usually retreat is withdrawal, pure and simple. One either responds to the ordinary expectations and does the ordinary things or one finds oneself becoming unable to respond. There is no *other* ministry, and it is so important to the minister's morale to gratify the expectations people have, and so hard to disappoint them, that retreat—what I have seen of it—stores up no energies for the effort to change things.

It is simply a fact that we do not now have a single eminent parish minister in America. Harry Emerson Fosdick is retired, and he has not been replaced, although he could not honestly be called a *great* preacher as, for instance, Paul Tillich has been, but rather a prominent one. Martin Luther King is no exception to this because obviously he is not pursuing a parish ministry and his leadership is moral rather than religious. He might have been a lawyer, like Gandhi, as far as his importance to civil rights is concerned. Religiously speaking, there is no eminence. We have gifted men, a few popular men, and a few men of astonishing energy, but none of the first rank, judging by things actually done. This is unheard of—I mean, it should be—and it brings home the realization of how ineffective our profession has become, not through any lack of energy and goodwill, but by the pressure of a remorseless circumstance and by thoughtlessness. To me it is inconceivable that in a ministry that *really matters* to our aspirations or needs, our whole nation should have failed to produce a single first-rate man. There is no use naming men like Reinhold Niebuhr, who spent more than a decade in a Detroit parish before going on to Union Seminary, because a melancholy afterthought detains us: the shift from the pulpit to the classroom is plainly a change of profession. Can it be thought unimportant that the one man on the horizon who gave some promise of reaching first-rate achievement in the toils of a parish, Martin E. Marty, has recently forsaken the parish for the university?

Certainly it cannot be said that our sermons refute the charge that we have become an unaccomplished profession. No sermons that I know of have the influence of a column by James Reston or Walter Lippmann, and I cannot even imagine a prominent

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preaching that could have the liveliness and controversial verve of almost any issue of the *National Review*. The printed sermons of Fosdick have a way of disintegrating in the memory instead of leaving some vivid essence, as the best sermons do. They are thorough and competent and kindly and intelligent, and they are carried along by well-controlled indignations and steady morale, but there is nothing astonishing or piercing—there are no lasting thoughts. In general it is true of preaching that nothing goes permanently home.

Literature and the movies bear witness to what I am saying. I can think of no Protestant description to equal the inspired impromptu sermon of the whiskey-priest in Graham Greene's novel, *The Power and the Glory* (to slip for a comparison outside the United States), nothing to equal the powerful utterances of the priest in the ship's hold in the movie, *On the Waterfront*. Hawthorne, by reaching back to the days of the Puritan divines in his *Scarlet Letter,* could give us a minor charismatic preacher in his patient, weakly Arthur Dimmesdale, but we come across no Dimmesdale in the novels of our contemporaries. Instead, we laugh and wince with Andrew Mackerel, in DeVries's *Mackerel Plaza,* or notice our lack of any positive feeling for the well-meaning, futile Eccles in Updike's *Rabbit, Run*. (Mackerel was witty and short-winded in the pulpit, Eccles pretty much the opposite.)

Preaching is something that ought to matter again—first, to preachers. Genuine preaching will always find a place for itself, although not a prosperous one: *What went ye out into the wilderness to see?* It originates in the prophetic impulse, which is like the impulse to art, or science, or philosophy, in that it is not granted by political sanction and has nothing directly to do with economics. It is not inevitably good, as if prophecy had not so often gone astray like any other human thing, but even the doubtful moral urgencies that possess a preacher may work themselves out to a salutary end, with openness and intelligence, because any vision that is pursued far enough becomes pure, as in Jonathan Edwards or Nietzsche, to mention two extraordinary visionaries who show this. The impulse to preach is widespread in human nature, and in a prolific society it takes on many new forms, but of course

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religious preaching will stand in the ancient religious tradition. It will be influenced by the ancient doctrines, but its own vision and conscientiousness is the force that fills the doctrinal sail. Probably preaching draws on liberated, random energies in the community, and these must often be futile, or transforming; fluctuating morale, for one thing, vision, the urge toward ideal community, the latency of the Holy Spirit. Preaching of this kind has a place if it makes a place, but its place is not assured. Its original impulse must not be domesticated or it will lose its purity, and this puts the preacher in a tension with the politician. Prophecy is never a member of the Establishment. Its business is to cry out, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven, or simply, Blessed are ye poor. It makes publicly evident the order of the Kingdom that subverts the order of the World so as to redeem it, but it has to discern the order of the Kingdom before it can do that.

This discernment is so often won in contemplation, and contemplation is so important in the life of the preacher, that we are bound to notice the connection it implies between vision and intellect. We must mention intellect unless we are to conceive prophecy superstitiously, as in the ancient ravings of the seer (intense preaching, I find, is raving enough). Without intellect, the keenness and emotionalism of prophecy, which are not of its essence, are merely wild and should be caged. I see no split between intellect and vision. I doubt if you can have the one without the other. Yet most American preaching has been evangelistic or moralistic, and in both styles we find a common avoidance of cosmology or science or history, as if religion could afford to be shrunk this way without ceasing to be visionary or true. *I haven't time,* would be the urban pastor's plea, but his plea is not valid, for we are entering a world (partly reentering, because for much of Europe's history this has been true) where a neglect of intellect by religion must be fatal. Evangelicalism in the pulpit has a long way to go before it can dissociate itself from the bad name Fundamentalism has given it, and it will never do this without a thorough intellectual cleansing. As for moralism in the pulpit, it is mostly a mistake. If the preacher echoes popular sentiment instead of

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purifying it, his moralism leads to tiresome homilies, advice. On this level he cannot compete with the daily editorial page or the *Reader's Digest*, and worse for preaching, he misses the prophetic aim, where a world is disclosed at once remote and urgent, a world not of the everyday but bearing on it at every point. This world can be neither seen nor understood if preaching forsakes its honorable connection with the intellectual pilgrimage of thinkers, discoverers, knowers, high-minded men.

Besides, how can it possibly do so if sermons announce doctrines? It is religious doctrine that brings preaching up against history and science and gives it a huge, huge task. Doctrine must ultimately take into account the remotest regions of the same world explored by science and philosophy. It is true enough that doctrine hardly matters to most Protestants, except vaguely, and that it hardly compares with emotion and piety and practical zeal in their regard, but that in itself suggests an intellectual failure. The aim of doctrine is to reveal truth, and if this matters on second thought, it has to be granted that preaching has intellectual work to do: doctrine is intellectual, and the truths of religion are no truths at all if they do not refer us eventually to the world.

There is no question here of the minister's wishing to *appear* intellectual and proud, of his imitating fine manners or affecting the tone of scholarship, because by its nature preaching has to be popular. What intellect will do for preaching is to make it more demanding, as it should be, and to keep it conscientious and honest. Prophecy is impossible where there is no conscientiousness.

The preacher will have abandoned certain securities if he accepts the vocation into prophetic preaching, for he will have stood beyond our commonplace moods and preoccupations, and he will summon us out of them. Personally, I find this dangerous, and it is one reason why preaching must be clear about its adherence to intellect. We may soar above intellect, in moments of rarest inspiration, but we must always come to rest in it again. Preaching that is modeled on the prophetic ideal will evoke our *ultimate concern*. It will have stood in a certain (low-keyed) ecstasy of the mind; it will stir us in what had seemed an inaccessible place and touch our vision. This is not to be done by methods and tech-

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niques; vocation is the only method that works, and by this word I mean something to which you belong. It is the requirement of preaching that the man shall have stood in the presence of the burning bush at least once in his life. Nothing else will enable him to touch us in the inaccessible place. It is the aim of preaching, I wish I could say, to transfigure life, but that is too much. A sane man will restrain those high delusions. But its aim is to contribute to the transfiguration of life following our encounter with holiness.

What holiness means I do not know, or even whether it is a positive something or (like the word, *time)* an aspect of the *whole* world. It is unapproachable, according to the ancient doctrines of religion, and we must believe them. "No one has ever seen God." What is definite is the sense of elusive experience and the possibility of real transfiguration. St. Boniface's chopping down of the sacred oak with impunity—it converted the pagans, but he honored their scruples enough to make an oratory of the lumber—proves either that there is no such thing as holiness or that it was not in the oak, and all other violations of taboos and desecrations of shrines that have not been followed by divine smitings compel the same logic. Holiness is not in the field or the wood or the chapel, nor in the wafer, the book, or the priest. It is a realm. But all that we can positively assert about it is our knowledge of its apartness and our vague conviction of its urgency. It is set apart from human ordinariness, and its sentinels are fear and awe. Undoubtedly *these* are real, and they are ineradicable. Together with joy they belong to any sincere apprehension of the world. Holiness is not moralism and it is not belief. It is an elusive and frightening—what? Utterly precious! utterly binding!

Probably it is asking too much to hope that preaching should want to become a vehicle for holiness, except that that is what its meaning is, however far beyond the ordinary practice it lies, while if preaching wishes to become another sort of thing, no longer holy and therefore unprotected against profanation of its mysterious urgencies, it loses the germ of its originality, loses its very office in simple moral commentary or timid speculation. That is something the preacher cannot afford because it forces him into competi-

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tion with professionals of all varieties, from editors to psychologists to political scientists, wherein he is sure to miss his calling in second-rate performances not distinguished by any special insight or elevation—the opposite of what vital preaching means.

If this disclosure of holiness and vision through the symbols of religion is what Protestant preaching means, or if it even resembles it, then we are considering an activity that needs a disciplined basis in the minister's daily life, because the effort required merely to do it is nothing short of enormous. The sermon will be something toward which he moves, week by week, an absorption, not a well-intentioned talk he does up Friday and Saturday, following a distracted week. Preaching is strenuous for the preacher emotionally as well as intellectually. It becomes a source of tension in his life. It will invade his solitude and come home in all its ghastly impossibility during insomnia (but one is also reconciled to preaching by solitude). Whatever it may be, it is not speech-writing on religious topics. It is devouring and bears down horribly on a man's energies and emotions, and like every other job, in one way or another, it will cost a man his life. It is a vocation.

Unhappily, as I have said, it has fallen from this vocation into mediocrity and unimportance, while the average, general effect of the ministry rises no higher. It is not as if this profession had traded preaching off for something more promising in the line of pastoral accomplishment, since this too has been thoroughly eroded by the intrusion of versatility. Nothing redeems a minister from his distractions, because nothing he does matters that much. What keeps him in business is his serviceability to the congregation as a religious organization congenial to a suburban piety. This is all that it means to call him (with H. Richard Niebuhr) a pastoral director. Insofar as he has any speciality, it is getting along with people, and handling the traffic at the church office.

Thus when we think of those who have given a new impulse to conscience or thought, we cannot name a single parish minister, because our profession lacks the very conditions necessary for that kind of achievement. These are concentration and intensity, which need a certain degree of detachment from the prevailing mood.

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Of course, spiritual intensity is never without its dangers, and the reputation of an intensely conscientious man like Bertrand Russell reminds us how often intensity will vex the newspaper public and be misunderstood (Russell is too problematic to be a perfectly clear example, but he is the most conspicuous example I can think of). A minister will not set out deliberately to knock the sides out of his church, and even if he did not hate to cause people distress, he would know that a controversy of conscience might cost him a job—it is what finally cost Jonathan Edwards his Northampton pulpit after a ministry of twenty-four years there—but the truth is unbudgeable that no awakening of conscience can be generated without intensity, and that intensity can be dangerous. I do not think that martyrdom is a thing to be sought out, but we are agreed that conscience is, and the ministers have not greatly affected it. Again, it is intense concentration that has distinguished men like Wittgenstein and Whitehead, and helped them reach new perspectives, although it is especially ironic that no parish minister should belong in their company since both these men stimulated religious thinking, Wittgenstein in his oracular utterances, and Whitehead in half a dozen pieces of visionary prose.

It is quite likely, I know, that we have not attracted men of this ability in the first place, for such pronounced individuals, who must passionately want to keep hold of their originality, may have felt that the ministry does not have enough intellectual freedom. That is the minister's rightful but doubtful possession. But if it is mostly doubtful, it is up to the ministers to regain their freedom in thinking and belief, and as always, it is there for the taking under pressure of conscience. It is not the ultimate problem, for freedom will make its way, and it does not explain why our many *gifted* men have not had worthier careers. Distraction and popularity are much worse problems just now, for under these conditions we have no more chance of concentrating on great accomplishment or discovery than those who put out the daily paper.

But distraction and popularity are one and the same thing with the minister's eager accommodation to a fading, nearly invisible religious community, as I have already shown. This community can hardly be said to exist in any satisfactory way. It must be

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looked for in the variety of ministerial chores. If this has reduced preaching to a lesser chore, it has swelled the pastoral ministry into a religiously thinned-out effort to be everybody's friend. The gift of fellowship that the congregation can hardly hope to give, the minister will try to supply—but how? He finds in the pastoral office little of the traditional representation of Christ. Should he try to be "religious," he would merely embarrass people or become a fraud. As a pastor, literally, he is *out of place,* and the same secularity that has driven him into versatility forces him to be friendly—a secular thing, which to most Protestants is an agreeable replacement for the ancient pastoral religious duties.

I know that genuine community means charitableness and reconciliation and people's enjoyment of one another, and this must always be rare. Probably the ideal has dominated only a few saints, and the usual human unreliabilities are what we might expect to find in congregations. Probably also it has been the pastor's age-old calling to show that moments of communion are possible if the religious ideal is steadfastly lived. It is just that ideal, however, that is no longer visible. Outside the services of worship, the place for Protestant community to happen is in a daily life where religion is out of sight. Moreover, friendliness keeps it out of sight and seemingly takes it for granted that any further sign of religious fellowship is needless. Friendliness is a secular thing. It has no real intimacy and carries no guarantee of a charitable heart, although that is what people truly want. Besides, it is something reserved to the enjoyment of friends, while among strangers and slight acquaintances, unless it develops into something better, it will begin as an assumed manner, which is only to be borne at our peak energies because it so easily degenerates under the strain, like the turning off of a practiced smile. No one seems to find it easy. People hang back on Sunday morning or slip hastily out of church, and the burden of their friendliness falls on the minister.

His temptation is to become a Professional Friend, or hypocrite. Call your minister, a Presbyterian tract muses fondly, to share your moments of joy! Call him when a son or daughter is going off to college! Possibly no great harm can come of such airy daydreaming, but the outline of the Professional Friend is in the

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background like a menacing shadow. Clearly, he has no upper limits to his friendliness and is on call at all hours, for it would take something from the spontaneity if you had to schedule an office appointment to share your moment of joy. A real man, with a gift for friendship and rapport, must at some time call a halt to any steady drain on his energies, but the Professional Friend blandly tolerates all because he gives so little beyond his manner. The little sparks that leap between people leap less often from a minister like this, but he is almost invincibly secure because he Gives the People What They Want. They feel cheated and go on demanding it.

Not every minister, do I mean to say, has sunk so low, but every minister must sag beneath his burdens, because it is enervating to labor under these conditions. If a man feels that he cannot afford the reputation of being unfriendly, and if he thinks that saying no to people's requests will be interpreted this way, he will take things on agreeably and spread himself thin: a morning with an alcoholic, an evening with a desperate married couple, a talk to the Senior Citizens, a visit with an elderly cancer patient, a conference with the church school superintendent, a form to fill out, a letter to write, arrangements with a Girl Scout leader for use of the church hall, chaperoning a youth square dance, an interview with a nonmember who wants her daughter's illegitimate daughter christened—anything a minister might be asked to take on, or volunteer for, in connection with the congregation (or denomination), or with public speaking, or religion, or human problems, or the community, and all of it to those outside the congregation free, or very cheap. Where, I ask, is the *idea* behind this endless flow of services, or of their wildly fluctuating worth? No one can honestly think that one man will be equally competent about procedures for adoption, filing for separation, counseling a neurotic mother, consoling the bereaved, interpreting the Psalms, praying at school assemblies, working for integration, and God only knows what else, but the fact of the matter is that without its ever entering anybody's head, this absurdly bloated idea is implied whenever the ministry is exposed to such things—as it is constantly, by the incoming requests and the minister's acquiescence. The pastor-

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preacher-priest idea might be said to be distributed among all these things, but it is ruinously disfigured. No other profession, religious or secular, has allowed itself to labor beneath such a disadvantage of makeshift and confusion. Rabbis know what they are supposed to be, at any rate—scholars of Holy Writ, able to judge and to teach on the basis of that knowledge. A Roman priest has a unique religious status by virtue of his ordination. He alone is qualified to dispense the sacraments, through which all graces come. He is not mainly a scholar or a preacher, but an officient at holy services, a bringer of sacraments, one who prepares others for receiving them, and so through this a pastor. When it comes to the secular professions, we find invariably an honest function and we find clarity about the sphere of human contact: to sell good clothing, to bandage a wound, to recommend a sound investment, to teach the elements of biology. Where human encounter is profound and the emotions are drained, as in therapy, the professional conventions protect and limit a man's vulnerability. The psychiatrist fights for his fifty-minute hour, a doctor told me, so that in that time he can minister with compassion. The ministry is comparatively unprofessionalized. It may be, for all I know, that distraction and makeshift fritter around the edges of all professions, but these have eaten their way into the heart of the Protestant ministry.

It is the muddle in the idea of Protestant community that has muddled the idea of the ministry and that must be cleared up in a parallel effort, since the ministry has no existence apart from the congregation, no mere independence. A minister cannot hang out a shingle and open a practice. His office is a cluster of functions in the congregation itself, not in the secular community, and it is the scattering of the congregation that has distracted him. There is, however, a serious question how this muddling in the religious community should be interpreted, and I think it can be looked at in a demanding, hopeful way. On the face of it is only a decline in standards for membership and a washing out of the traditional beliefs, but one is entitled to wonder if this does not mask a deep, irresistible transformation in the religious community, such as historically it must have gone through many times.

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I take the congregation of worshipers, presided over by one or more ministers, to be the enduring, basic, social form for religion in our part of the world. Originally, it is the little community of those who have accepted the word of the prophet or of the missionary, or else a clustering around some priestly rite. They are huddled apart, a pathetic, ardent contrast to the unheeding society with all its vitality and corruption. They will emphasize this apartness and their own intense togetherness, and they will look down on the great world beyond, often not understanding how much they are compromised by belonging to it. Paradoxically, the congregation expands in a direction that, if completed, will include the whole society. It cannot help having that tendency. In what it represents, uses, depends on, it will include at a thousand points the world from which it has tried to flee, and if history favors the little community, it will grow from the Christianity of sect and catacomb to the indifferent Christendom of massive societies. In Western religion we find always this paradox of the apartness of the religious community, somewhat strained and incomplete in its aloofness from the world. It is in Judaism, in the tension between all the people of Israel and the remnant of the faithful or alarmed. It is in Christianity in the tension of the church in, but not, allegedly, of the world. The paradox is heightened because preaching is addressed to a people, not just a congregation; ultimately, to a world. *My people,* is the prophetic refrain. The apartness of the congregation is a certain tension in its mood and practice, rarely an independence, although hermits and wilderness monasteries, Essenes and Mormons remind us that the religious do, sometimes, become detached. "Religion begins as a breaking off, as a going away," Abraham Heschel has written. "It continues in acts of nonconformity to idolatry." This is a bold expression of that apartness, and secretly reminiscent of the story of Abraham.

In our Protestant churches apartness is almost nil, and there is little or nothing to impel congregations and ministers in that direction. This is no contradiction to the congregational idea, for in Israel, in Islam, in Christendom the congregation is often the nation. It is the opposite extreme to monasticism, where the congregation, being all single and withdrawn, cannot even re-

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produce itself. It is possible that this benign accommodation has imbued the American community with its moral fervor, or that it has given it a religious tinge. Certainly, it has spread abroad a few widely held religious ideas. But it has lowered the churches religiously, and we do not look to them for the elevation of holiness or the distance of prophecy.

But the important thing to remember about this accommodation, which has so amiably relaxed the congregation's apartness, is that it is prepared in the uttermost reaches of Protestant conviction. I am referring again to the Protestant worldliness, which, because Protestants are historically-minded, has lately led to a new perception. It is the *necessary congruence* between religion and the world that has now become fully visible, and the discovery has proved congenial. The religious acceptance of the world as the sphere of vocation has proved congenial for the rational view of the world as, somehow, the origin of religion. I do not know how many Protestants would agree to this, but I do know, for instance, that this insight is as clear as it possibly could be in the theology of Paul Tillich and is no small reason for his attractiveness. The necessary congruence, at some point, between religion and world has gone all the way into religious beliefs, which we do not now think of as directly revealed. They have become openly historical. We see when and where they have originated, how they have developed, where they have flourished, what varieties they have bred, and how much of imagination and philosophy and history has gone into their making. A Catholic will view the developments of his church's beliefs through a different doctrinal lens, seeing them as inspired unfoldings of the original deposit of revelation. As far as I know, Protestantism has no similar doctrine, and thus it has no openings for supernatural infusions, while the fact of change, which it studies with minute accuracy, disturbs the idea of the original revelation. The contrast is brought out vividly in that while the Church of Rome could in 1950, roughly ninety years after Darwin and forty-five years after Einstein, proclaim the Assumption of the Virgin Mary bodily into heaven as a dogma necessary to be believed, the Protestant theologian Rudolf Bultmann had by the same date already won a wide hearing

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for his demand that the very Gospel be demythologized. This clearly implies that the secular tools of reason and history are as such agreeable to a Protestant outlook. Morton Scott Enslin has compared Christianity to "a stream, constantly fed by tributaries, not a pool without intake or outlet." The older view would have conceived religion as a river originating from a single source, but we know too much history to hold this view sincerely today, and while the Catholics have a way of assimilating this knowledge (or probably never forgot it), Protestants, by the same knowledge but on different doctrinal assumptions, tend to be expelled from their beliefs. For better or for worse, Protestantism is wed to worldliness. It is open to reason without dogmatic limits, to history and philology, to science, to intelligence. When moral strenuousness has had its hour and beliefs are vague, and in a world that calls itself Christian, it is hard not to think of relaxing—a little bit.

But any relaxation that is not the peace of God is what the Holy Spirit forbids and shuns, and rightly. In the religious community it means losing apartness, which is fatal, and while apartness may have many modes—solitude, belief, symbol, rite, sacred tradition, moral seriousness, concern, ecstasy, purity of life—it must in all possible relevant modes be there, and be genuine and true. Otherwise there is no sacred community. And the minister's difficulty is that he does not know in any serious or joyous way where to find that community he still believes in. He is scattered and distraught in his search. Intellectual concentration and spiritual intensity are the last things he can count on developing, just when he needs them most. The practical, commonsense solution is that he must learn to resist the thoughtlessness of so many demands, but that is no more than a beginning, for any effort to remodel the ministry will force him up against the perplexities of a vanished, momentary Protestant community, because the one implies the other: minister and church, pastor and flock, preacher and congregation, priest and people. It must be an urgent thing for ministers to be able to discern this community in truth, and they will preach to bring it out again. Without this, the rest is vanity.

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We Built a Shaky House

BARRY SPACKS

We built a shaky house with no adorning,
And said the house was large and gay and foursquare;
We took eyefuls of silence with our coffee
And peace seemed handsome till we started learning
That walls of raucous roses whitewashed over
Will bloom again, and love seek houses elsewhere.
We shut our eyes to find some room for turning.

We shut our eyes, and when we faced the morning
We found our only window double-lighted,
One casement granting each a different vision.
We called: *love, love!* And then the house was burning:
We rushed through rooms that never seemed intended
For more than one, and both of us full-hearted.
We'd built a house that had no room for turning.

We've built a better house; we've taken warning;
And now all angles intersect each other,
The walls adorned with many-colored roses.
Our new-made place will hold a world's sojourning:
We are the very members of the structure,
And raise an honest roof against all weather,
And dance while rooms dance with us, turning, turning.

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Japanese Intellectuals—and Americans

DAVID RIESMAN

IN JAPAN AS IN THIS COUNTRY it seems important to distinguish between academicians and intellectuals. Extrapolating from a definition Richard Hofstadter makes in *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life,* I would define the academician as someone who lives by ideas and the intellectual as someone who lives for them. The same person, of course, can be both. And many Japanese intellectuals are almost forced outside the academic tradition because, paradoxically, they have to live off more than a single font of ideas. The universities pay less, far less, than the comparable American ones. Therefore the academic disciplines are less autonomous in sustaining their members, many of whom have to run about the country (as happens in other countries also) consulting, talking on television, or (in the social sciences) doing market research. The broadening of perspectives necessary to get along economically may lead some to a broadening for its own sake, although with the Japanese, as with us, mixed and diffuse motives prevail.

Combined activities of this sort are especially characteristic of life in Tokyo where the professors at the leading universities sustain a pace comparable to that of Columbia, only more so. There is, of course, much greater centralization of Japanese life, including intellectual life, than anything to be found in the United States. If one wants to explain to American colleagues what the University of Tokyo is like, one might say, "Well, if you put together Harvard

✪ At the Asian Studies Meetings in Washington, D. C., in March, 1964, DAVID RIESMAN was recruited to speak on the Japanese intellectual in a program on the Asian intellectual. Mr. Riesman says: "Making a few notes, I spoke extemporaneously and the text here is based on the tape recording. I am grateful for the criticisms from Dr. Robert J. Lifton and from Professor David Plath. The basis for my remarks is a sojourn in Japan in the fall of 1961, and the work of scholars on the subject of contemporary Japan. No claim is made for my own scholarship in the area."

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and Berkeley and the University of Michigan and Georgetown, you might begin to approximate its centrality." There are many small colleges in Japan, including women's colleges, but there are not the tree-shaded retreats—here the situation is more comparable to that in France, with its educational and intellectual focus on Paris. The University of Kyoto is an immensely influential institution in a major area of population. There are universities in Hokkaido, Hiroshima and elsewhere. Thus one result of centralization is that a professor at the University of Tokyo or Hitotsubashi (also in Tokyo) or Kyoto, has access to a national educated audience through serious journals and broadcasting in a way that is less possible in the United States where, despite Right Wing contentions concerning centralization of power, we have cities like Washington which have government but no great universities, and cities like Ann Arbor and Berkeley, which have great universities but little else.

Yet, despite centralization, Japanese intellectuals often take their direction from a very narrow channel, from a group of agemates with whom they went to the university, or even from a particular professor whose disciple they are. For instance, I met a few Harvard graduates in Japan who, had they been Americans, would never have been so corny as to display the big "H" on the banner or the plaques; this alumni feeling is stronger in Japan among the graduates of leading universities than it is with us even among the graduates of colleges of the middle range. There is a particularism in Japanese life, a clannishness in the literal sense, which contrasts strongly with the universalism and even abstractness with which ideas are often expressed.

To get into one of the leading Japanese universities is about as hard, and the results as rewarding, as it used to be here at home to get into one of the major medical schools. You have all read about the *ronin,* the people who take the examinations for the university over and over, in the hope of finally landing the big chance. (And, as with our medical schools, once one has managed to get in, it is very difficult to flunk out.) In a world of particularism, the examination system has brought quasi-universal standards and a degree of meritocracy to Japan, qualified inevitably by the advantages the metropolitan middle-class family has even in the public schools

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to prepare its children for the university—a preparation whose ardors are described by Ezra Vogel in his chapter on "The Infernal Examination System."[1] In Japan I discussed with some secondary school teachers their anxieties concerning the dryness, the exhaustion of motive, that the pressures to get into the universities induced in many young people. But in this worry, unlike some characteristic preoccupations in this country, there was little hint of anti-intellectualism, little feeling that "the whole man" was being neglected by university entrance standards in favor of "mere" academic prowess.

Readers may compare these meritocratic pressures with patterns of rigorous selection for the university in Europe. But while Japanese universities after the Meiji Restoration did incorporate a good many French and German patterns, since the Second World War American models have had a wider influence. One difference from Europe is that many more people attend college and university in Japan than in France or Great Britain; the elite government universities are highly selective and so are their major private counterparts, but there are institutions available for every pocketbook if not for every level of ability. Thus there is a fluidity and openness in Japanese life comparable to ours in some respects, limited by the fact that major universities are likely to hire only their own graduates, in spite of the decline of inbreeding since the War. (Something over seventy percent of the faculty of the University of Tokyo are graduates, as compared to the greater homeguardism of the University of Kyoto where the figure is on the order of ninety percent. Many large companies recruit only from these and other prestige universities, such as Keio or Waseda.) At the same time, these intramural tendencies are curiously counterbalanced by a continuance of an older Japanese academic and intellectual tradition of finding a Western mentor whom one introduces into Japanese life by translating him, and by becoming a kind of vicarious *deshi* or disciple for him.

I remember one discussion with a group of Japanese political scientists, a number of whom had staked their energies on the adoption of various American theorists—perhaps this sort of vi-

[1] See Ezra F. Vogel, *Japan's New Middle Class: The Salary Man and His Family in a Tokyo Suburb* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963).

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carious adoption is a counterpart to the willingness of Japanese men to be adopted into families and take the name of their new family (something American men are probably too independence-prone to do). Thus, among these political scientists, there was one who had "imported" Harold Lasswell, and another, Talcott Parsons. One had introduced the notions of the veto group in *The Lonely Crowd,* while still another had staked his claim to C. Wright Mills's concept of the power elite. It appeared to me that the latter, which was simpler, and appealed readily to a people whose own country seems to them highly centralized and dominated by a power elite, had vanquished the looser, more amorphous, perhaps more ambiguous concepts of *The Lonely Crowd.* (The *Monthly Review* is said to have a considerably larger circulation and almost certainly a greater influence in Japan than here.)

The use of non-Japanese concepts in the Japanese scene introduces a certain vagueness even when the concepts seem well defined, so that one hears Japanese talking "power elite" or other such terms, without deriving them from within their own society.[2] Of course, the same thing happens here because the theories of many theorists are out-of-date in application to a particular society by the time they are published (this certainly includes my own work); and by the time the theories are understood and assimilated in a society, they may be far out-of-date. One can listen to Japanese intellectuals talking about their society as "situationally-oriented," in Ruth Benedict's terms, or "other-directed," in *Lonely Crowd* terms, taking from the outside even observant or clarifying things said about them or about other societies, and in that sense exhibiting a cultural humility at once troubling and attractive.

Thus, if we sum up what I have said so far, it would seem that Japanese intellectuals are traditional in their strong alumni feeling and their orientation to their group of fellow disciples and to their mentors. But it does not follow that Japanese academic

[2] I am saying nothing here that Japanese intellectuals have not said more strongly about themselves. See, for striking commentary, Masao Maruyama, *Thought and Behaviour in Modern Japanese Politics,* translated in part and edited by Ivan Morris (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963); and see the discussion, published since the Asian Studies Meetings, in the issue on the Japanese intellectuals of the *Journal of Social and Political Ideas in Japan,* Vol. II, April 1964, No. 1.

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scholars are dedicated to their institutions in the way that, let us say, an American professor may be dedicated to Amherst or Haverford or Grinnell or the many other small colleges that can attract the loyalty of highly talented faculty members and wide-ranging intellectuals. On the other hand, the much diminished pattern of mobility in Japan means that a professor is not always looking for the next institution to which he hopes to move while regarding his own home base as a transient location—he is not likely to ask a friend, as I have been asked, whether Bennington is a good place to be called from. Thus, while on the one hand the institutional orientation or the concern for their students of the most dedicated American academicians seems to be absent on the whole, the exploitation of one's own temporary landing place, for purposes of promotion elsewhere, is also minimized by the academic counterpart of the lifetime employment characteristic in the past of Japanese occupational life in general. To locate himself in the stream of ideas as against an occupational niche, the Japanese intellectual has seemed to be searching for his identity by following a foreign model in a Japanese mode, personalizing his relation to that model where he can, and applying the mentor's ideas with greater or lesser literalness to the Japanese case.

So far as I could see, very few of Japan's most wide-ranging intellectuals have the kind of close local and regional ties that in the past have characterized men at such eminent land-grant institutions as the Universities of Wisconsin and Minnesota. This goes back to what I said earlier about Japanese centralization: the major newspaper chains that see their roles as purveyors of culture either directly or through affiliated serious weeklies and monthlies; the leading monthlies themselves; the government broadcasting organization, N.H.K., and other broadcasters—all these serve as Tokyo middlemen between the "social critics" as they are called, many of them academic intellectuals, and the population at large.

The professors' extramural appearances draw support from their university connections much in the way that a practicing physician in our own society may want a connection with a teaching hospital. We have such "social critics" of our own, but many of them are only periodically or marginally academic (consider Lewis Mumford, Paul Goodman, Harold Taylor, Dwight Mac-

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Donald, Mary McCarthy, Norman Mailer. In the United States the academic disciplines seem to expect and demand more of their active members, and of course this dedication to a discipline and its exigencies exists in Japan also, notably in the sciences.

The relatively wide scope of the Japanese academic intellectuals is facilitated by a kind of happy amateurism that exists alongside a quasi-Victorian pedantry in many of the older professors. Partly, as I have suggested, this amateurism is encouraged by the need to earn additional money—to live comfortably in Tokyo, as in large cities generally, but considerably more so (rents are fantastically high), it takes a lot of money. But I think there is also at work here the relative lack of anti-intellectualism in Japan. In fact, if one wants to understand intellectuals, one has also to know what they are up against. On this I want to venture some speculations that may be quite mistaken concerning why there is relatively little anti-intellectualism in Japan. It isn't entirely absent. The Japanese word *sensei* or intellectual master or mentor can be used ironically; it can have the connotation of absentminded professor. But on the whole it is my impression that Japan, like Britain, is a place where anti-intellectualism is not a recurrent experience of the young would-be intellectual as he goes through his formative secondary education.[3] A play like *The Male Animal* is hard to imagine in Japan. Many American intellectuals seem to have suffered in high school because the football player got the pretty girls—in an older generation, at any rate, a few became athletes or big game hunters and claimed not to be intellectuals and certainly not aesthetes. The school experience leaves its mark in the feeling of many American intellectuals that there is even more anti-intellectualism in the society than I think actually does exist. (When they become professors, they can sometimes take it out on the football player in their classes and sometimes identify with him.) The Japanese are enormously sports-minded but sports do not seem with them to have quite the *machismo,* the male vanity element, that they do with us; to be sports-minded is almost an aspect of being culture-minded and the Japanese are very culture-minded indeed.

[3] For some of the versions of anti-intellectualism in the British public schools, see Rupert Wilkinson, *Gentlemanly Power: British Leadership and the Public School Tradition* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1964).

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It seems possible that the very difficulty of learning the Japanese language and the refined tasks of calligraphy helps create a society that is highly print-oriented. The vast majority of the population learns to read and write by the sixth grade, passing beyond the state of semiliteracy in which so large a part of the American population remains. (Few of our youngsters are stimulated by the absurdities of English spelling.)

The great newspaper chains in Japan, such as *Asahi,* cover the country. They put out nothing comparable to the beefy anti-intellectualism of the New York *Daily News,* the St. Louis *Globe Democrat,* or ever so many other papers in this country. There is a great diet of pornography and of sports news and so on—one can find almost anything there—but the salient newspaper and television tycoons bear a sense of responsibility, sobriety and respect for the intellectuals' verdict that is greater than one finds in American life. One reason for this is that anti-intellectualism, like any other ism, needs intellectuals, and the Right Wing in Japan, which might be a home for such thinking (in contrast to the relatively unthinking conservatives in the government and in business life), has been discredited by war and the ravages of militarism.[4] In the United States the Right Wing media provide an endless forum for anti-intellectualism, although of course there is no necessary congruence between political position and attitudes toward intellectualism, as Hofstadter's book makes clear.

Intellectualism is also favored in Japan by the degree of respect that hangs on for the elderly, although Japan is much less of a gerontocracy than may appear at first glance. In the web of relationships in Japan, the young are polite to their seniors, but they have a certain authority too, as they do in any rapidly changing society where they are more hep, more modern, than their elders. And the Left, or what is thought to be the Left, young or old, has considerable moral hegemony because it seems pure, less corrupted by "the system," and less compromised by wartime and prewar collaboration. Many young, idealistic Japanese regard Communism, at least of the Soviet variety, as stodgy and out-of-date and some opt

[4] There remain many Japanese intellectuals, and I was fortunate to meet some of them, who are devoted to Japanese traditions and hope to blend these with contemporary requirements in a happy syncretism. But these new nationalists find a usable Japanese past, among haiku-writing samurai, for example, which they do not see as anti-intellectual.

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for a kind of existentialism or nihilism, but this does not feed into a national climate of anti-intellectualism.

Beyond these considerations, it seems to me that the subordination and compliance of most Japanese women allow Japanese men to be intellectuals without considering themselves in any way less manly. The women remind the men every day that they *are* men—a great convenience for them but an undoubted constriction for the women. As a result, the Japanese intellectual, while he may be alienated in certain respects, which I shall come to, does not grow up with the feeling that there is something a little bit askew with him; nor does he, so far as I could discover, suffer from the fear that he may be homosexual, which begins to haunt some male students at the better American universities who may have preferred books or paintings to sports or hot rods or dating in the seventh grade. Art is a bisexual pursuit in Japan, as it is only beginning to be with us. There are, to be sure, Japanese homosexual artists, but the pattern to be found in our own South, where some male writers may conceivably have turned homosexual because their preoccupation alienated them from the other boys in school, seems less common in Japan. The great majority of articulate Japanese intellectuals, quite apart from position on the political spectrum, are in favor of peace and disarmament. There is very little cult of toughness—in this respect the samurai ethos seems to have disappeared as well as the kamikaze ethos, in spite of the enormous audience for Western movies, including those made in Japan.

In a fine paper at these same meetings, my colleague, Robert Bellah, spoke of the sense of social responsibility of Watsuji Tetsuro. The absence of such a sense of responsibility has been a source of self-criticism among Japanese intellectuals. And our Ambassador, Edwin O. Reischauer, while fostering contact with the intellectuals in Japan, has also chided them for being insufficiently connected with the ongoing governmental and social affairs of their country—in other words, for their mood of alienation. Reading his comments, it seemed to me that he must have had in mind such men as Professor Galbraith or the members over the years of the President's Council of Economic Advisers or other academicians and intellectuals who have concerned themselves with public af-

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fairs on an interim or part-time basis. Possibly, from the vantage of Harvard University, he may have exaggerated the role of American intellectuals who have been ready and willing to work with both Republican and Democratic administrations; there have been some prominent ones on the national scene, but they are still a small minority. The number of American intellectuals and/or academicians willing to take exposed positions in the political arena is perhaps not wholly proportionate to the number of locations where we are free to explore without suffering martyrdom, whether grave or mild. But there have been heroic men, notably in some of our more pressured Southern universities, and there is in this country—and many Japanese deeply admire this—a tradition of individual responsibility, including the responsibility to form a committee or a group.

In fact, despite what I have just said, I would agree with Ambassador Reischauer that Japanese intellectuals, taken as a whole, remained somewhat more alienated from their government than intellectuals here. I've already suggested that their range is narrower in not including the articulate Right Wing, usually anti-intellectual intellectuals who in the United States tell their audiences how subversive and un-American their liberal enemies are. But apart from the somewhat narrower political range covered by Japanese intellectuals, it is necessary to look at the government in power, the Liberal Democrats (that is, the conservatives) from their point of view.

There are, of course, many points of view. But in general, the Liberal Democrats appear to the Japanese intellectuals much as the Eisenhower Administration appeared to our own intellectuals, that is, a hopelessly benighted, amiable, "big-stomach" business government, with which no broadly cultivated and intellectually sensitive person could possibly make contact. And this may be so even for the many who have freed themselves from the Left Wing and Communist clichés that pervaded the scene in the immediate postwar era. The separate, often satisfying, and almost always fully preoccupying worlds in which Japanese professional people live make contact exceedingly difficult between even university-educated bureaucrats and university-educated "outside" intellectuals. Economists, public health people, experts of one or another sort

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do of course have contacts with the government. But these intelligent professionals have seldom been intellectuals. Among the latter, a number whom I have met wished that there could be a President Kennedy with whom they might possibly identify (even while disagreeing with some of his foreign policies) but they maintained a scorn for their politicians and prime ministers that seemed, if anything, greater than the scorn (to me very unpleasant and unfair) with which similar breeds are regarded in the United States.

As I have already suggested, the pressures from the Left are less great than they once were, in the sense of compressing Japanese intellectual opinion within a quasi-Marxist enclosure. (The level of Marxism often appears to be vintage Harold Laski, London 1926, or thereabouts.) At the same time, there is no large cadre of ex-Communists who have turned anti-Communist or of Socialists who have become anti-Communist as the result of dismal experience with the United Front. The syncretistic tendencies of Japanese life allow people to move with their group without the sharp demarcation of intellectual boundaries more characteristic of our own forensic and argumentative tradition. In this connection, not all American intellectuals may realize the advantages of having strong unions and political parties of the Left in terms of the freedom provided for a variety of Left Wing positions. Outside of metropolitan centers and great universities, American intellectuals and anybody else can be attacked for holding opinions that would be regarded as conservative in most of the world. And even our freer universities suffer from relative uniformity in areas like disarmament and foreign policy—a uniformity of which we are not always aware. I was reminded of it by an experience a few weeks ago. I was in a Detroit hotel room; I turned on television, and I saw a program on Central Europe which I got in on in the middle. It was obviously a documentary and at first I thought it was educational television. Then as I listened I became more and more bewildered because the participants talked in a very easygoing, casual, cool way about the G.D.R., the East German Communist regime; they talked about Central Europe in such a way that I couldn't believe it was even the most independent, American educational television; and I was stupid enough not to realize until the program was at an end what had bewildered me. It was C.B.C., the

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Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. It was a shock to realize that even the best American television would almost certainly not have presented so detached, nonapologetic, nondefensive a discussion of Central Europe.

While in the United States a dissenting intellectual may have to cope with obscene phone calls in the night or accusations of softness on Communism, the Japanese intellectual is not under comparable pressure from what is left of the Right Wing. He does fear, though, the possibility of assassination by some youthful rightist fanatic. He may fear also to fall afoul of conventional Left Wing views even more than we do, although, as I have said, these have become more differentiated and less conventional as the result of criticisms by men in the mold of Professor Maruyama.

The reaction of Americans resident in Japan to this constellation of attitudes was no less interesting to me than the attitudes of the Japanese themselves. I'm rather sorry for that kind of tourist who says he doesn't want to meet the other Americans. It would be a fascinating study (one on which John and Ruth Useem have been embarked in India) to see who are the people who are disappointed lovers of another culture, who can't really get in and yet have rejected their own. In many parts of the world the American does not believe himself ethnocentric yet discovers himself behaving as a one hundred percent plus American. And the American in Japan faces the problem of the different sources of rationality in the two societies, our own and theirs.

I have found among many Americans resident in Japan, in the Embassy, in the newspaper world, and elsewhere, a kind of unwillingness to allow the Japanese to be different and a plaintive protest at the difference. I am speaking here of American intellectuals, men often quite at home in Japanese language and literature. For example, I recall some very brilliant Americans speaking of the feeling of wrestling with spaghetti when they tried to argue with Japanese whom they found too polite, too conciliatory, too lacking in a sense of individual commitment. They wanted always to press the Japanese to learn where they stood, and they encountered vagueness, a kind of fuzzy quality which offended their definitions of rationality—definitions that sometimes equate rationality with what is merely rationalistic. I had a similar experience at the Japan-

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America Round Table held at Dartmouth in October, 1962, where Herbert Passin and Shepard Stone brought together some leading Japanese academicians, intellectuals, newspapermen, businessmen, with their American counterparts. On this occasion, the American forensic talent was at its maximum; but it could not find its match among a group of Japanese who, with determined exceptions, were gentle and sometimes hortatory rather than organized and sharp. In speaking this way, I am referring especially to the older Japanese (and to academicians and dignitaries as well as intellectuals) who strike their own younger generation, as well as Americans, as incapable of forthright rational argument. The younger Japanese, and especially those who have visited this country or traveled elsewhere, are quicker to respond and more willing to engage in the sort of rational argument that many Americans enjoy. They themselves complain about their lack of combativeness and regard it as a count against themselves that they are often vague, often grandiose; they sometimes suggest that their language itself has its own built-in persuasions in this direction. But my own feeling has been that the Japanese style has many virtues, not least of them a relative absence of fanaticism—not that periods of fanaticism have been lacking in earlier Japanese history.

I have suggested some of the beneficences of Japanese intellectual styles and also some of the lacunae. What else is lacking? There is not only the lack of fluidity in the university system, which can be transcended only by that minority of intellectuals who hold down many payrolls, but also a relative absence of several disciplines that I regard as vital for intellectual understanding today, notably psychoanalysis, and in lesser degree, cultural anthropology. To be sure, the Japanese do have departments of anthropology, but the kind of cross-cultural understanding that anthropology has brought to many Americans in this generation seems absent. Likewise, the work of Dr. Takeo Doi demonstrates that psychoanalytic psychiatry, like virtually every other intellectual invention the world over, can also be found in Japan. But the intellectual climate has not been deeply influenced by awareness of similarities in man's unconscious (granted that Freud exaggerated these similarities). The relative absence of these strands of thought may reflect happenstance; for example, there may have been few

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Japanese academic entrepreneurs to create new departments in these areas. But I suspect something more basic is involved, namely, a feeling deep in the Japanese sense of self, of belonging to a unique human species. Whether in humility or in submerged pride, the Japanese tend ethnocentrically to think of themselves as alone in the world. Here at home these attitudes exist too, but they prevail more among the uneducated or the defensively educated, and many American intellectuals are heir to a more universalistic outlook in which there may be judgments of *American* exceptionalism but not of Americans ourselves as exceptional. Japanese ethnocentrism is related to the uneasy perplexity of the Japanese intellectual as to what league he plays in. Is his an island that by accident is not located on the English Channel and happens to be in Asia, uncomfortably close to a lot of "backward" people?

When I was in Japan I talked with some Japanese about the possibilities of a Japanese Peace Corps. (Since then there have been some stirrings in this direction.) I met the feeling that people in Burma or Malaya for obvious historical reasons would not welcome Japanese Peace Corps volunteers. I also was reminded of the lack of civic sense to which Ambassador Reischauer's remarks had partly referred and of which many Japanese intellectuals complain. But in addition, I came repeatedly on the feeling that we Japanese are a small, impecunious nonpower who could not be expected to undertake a program of international service. After the disaster of the War, many Japanese, in spite of the evidence around them, still do not believe that they have become a leading industrial, commercial and cultural (although happily not military) power.

Underlying all this, there was the feeling of the near impossibility of cross-cultural contact. I remember being with a group of young Japanese intellectuals who were jazz fans who said late one night that they felt they could never really make it, they could never really be hep, because they weren't Americans. And I said, well, you know, American whites often feel this way but it's wrong. It's inhuman to feel that our empathy is bounded by biology. I couldn't, I think, get this across. They couldn't understand why I liked Japanese food; they thought I must be putting on some kind of act, and when I met Americans in Japan who are second genera-

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tion, whose children are third generation, who speak Japanese perfectly, I realized that from the Japanese point of view (quite apart from American racism which these Americans did not possess), nobody can ever opt to be Japanese: he has to be born Japanese.

This has its impact on the quality of Japanese social science in a larger sense. My own feeling is that Japanese social science will not overcome its diffidence until Japanese social anthropologists come here to see whether Tocqueville was right, not what can be learned for Japan. A student did a paper in a course of mine last year on the writings of Japanese travelers to America from the nineteenth century down to date. Most of these seem to have been novelists or scientists or diplomats writing wholly for a Japanese audience and not also for an American one. (There are a few exceptions. Consider, for example, the study by John Bennett, Herbert Passin, and Nagai Michio of Japanese students in the United States and on their return home, a study that remains to some extent within the ethnic group.) Until the Japanese have a kind of moral self-confidence and feeling of at-homeness in the whole world, until they can come here and study us with a feeling of the right to do so, we won't be helped as much as we could be to understand ourselves less badly, and they won't understand themselves less badly either.

The group of young Japanese scholars who have in recent years studied and taught in the United States are quite capable of such investigation. Many of them belong to the group which sometimes refers to itself as "the third generation." By this term, they mean that they have gone through the Meiji "assimilationist" period and through the second generation's rebellion against this and reversion to tradition, and are now able to select from the whole stream of contemporary culture, at home and abroad, now and in the past, what is interesting or relevant or exciting. In their outlook there is perhaps something a bit comparable to the "third generation" return noted by students of American immigration, such as Oscar Handlin, in which the third generation Italian intellectual can again enjoy pizza and the third generation Jewish intellectual can tell Yiddish jokes and visit Israel. But members of the third generation in Japan have one large advantage over their counterparts in this country. Their highbrow culture seems less

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unequivocally highbrow, less preoccupied than ours is with the fear that something we like or fail sufficiently to dislike will label us as middlebrow or naïve. Nathan Glazer (whose longer visit overlapped with mine) and I sought to find out if there were any Japanese intellectuals who detested Mount Fuji: was there conceivable in Japan an anti-Fuji cult? We could find none. Obviously Japanese intellectuals reject many aspects of their own culture all the time, as in the common rejection of what is dubbed "monopoly capitalism" or "feudal remnants," or whatever other labels one may choose. But nature in general and Mount Fuji in particular are not rejected. This acceptance of nature can be seen as similar to a more general acceptance of aspects of popular culture that many American intellectuals would regard it as a badge of office to reject. It is hard to conceive of American intellectuals who would like both Monteverdi and Kostelanetz, but many Japanese intellectuals could like both of these and pachinko too. The fear to be naïve or corny is less strong in Japanese intellectual life, except in the specifically political area. There is a kind of syncretism in which one sees combinations that to the sophisticated Western taste look funny. This easy acceptance is appealing to me. It seems that there is less rejection, more enthusiasm, more happy amateurism in a number of Japanese intellectuals than with us. The "third generation" can enjoy traditional architecture and modern architecture, haiku and jazz, kimonos and striptease, nature and neon, unfrightened by the overwhelming, commodious smorgasbord served up by modern mass communications.

Even among the members of the third generation, however, it is rare to find women accepted on a footing of intellectual equality. Intellectual sociability in Japan remains almost exclusively stag. In the older academic generation, sociability in my limited experience moves awkwardly from pomposity and heaviness to frivolity, although one is spared that teasing and heavy-handed kidding that serve as a release from sobriety for many Americans. Japanese use sake to become childish but not tough. Only among younger intellectuals can one find a sociable combination of seriousness and humor, purpose and lightness, sharing and subtlety. Sociability in Japan would appear to be an area where the residual subordination of women exacts its price and where traditions of kin and clan,

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attenuated though they may be becoming among the young, have not yet combined in a happy way with Western forms of non-kin sociability.[5]

Margaret Mead has commented that in a cross-cultural comparison or study it is important to have someone present from a third culture, as in the instance of a Chinese anthropologist studying the Pueblo Indians, a near monopoly of American anthropologists. However, by necessity, my Japanese comparisons here have been almost entirely with the United States; and when I have talked with Japanese, partly because I am an American and partly because of their own preoccupations, comparisons with America have also predominated.

Through my generous hosts at International House in Japan, I had an opportunity to meet a variety of intellectuals and not only those with an orientation to America in terms of our foreign policies. Thus, I talked with Japanese critical of American nuclear policy, and others, often politically conservative, who were hopeful that Japan could find a role as a bridge or mediator between Communist China and the United States. What I could hear and overhear were only the tiniest fragments of complicated and many-sided internal dialogues and external projections. Perhaps I understand the United States a bit better as a result, and concerning Japan, I know enough to be confused and not quite enough to be silent.

[5] American sociability has many defects which several collaborators and I have been exploring more or less systematically. See, for example, Riesman, Jeanne Watson, and Robert J. Potter, "Sociability, Permissiveness, and Equality," *Psychiatry*, Vol. 23, No. 4, November, 1960; reprinted in *Abundance for What? and Other Essays* (New York: Doubleday, 1964).

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Volcanoes, Nuclear Explosions and Ecology

JEAN M. INGERSOLL

A CRUCIAL PROBLEM OF THE BALANCE OF NATURE was introduced with the detonation of the atomic bomb over Hiroshima. The element of residual radioactivity in the environment, as well as the immediate effects of nuclear explosions, demanded a fresh assessment of a wide range of ecological factors. As yet, however, no large-scale studies of the ecological effects of nuclear explosions have been undertaken, although most effects on the physical world and a good many of the gross effects on humans have been studied. Lacking experimental data of this kind, we can achieve some understanding of the problems involved by looking at the ecological pattern of naturally occurring disasters with results similar to those that might be expected from a nuclear catastrophe. Volcanic eruptions are the nearest counterpart of nuclear explosions among natural phenomena, and an interesting comparison of the two types of explosions has come from a study of the tremendous eruption of Krakatau in 1883.

This spectacular eruption excited considerable interest at the time of its occurrence. During the years following, while the skies of the North Temperate Zone still glowed with intense red sunsets or were feebly warmed by a green sun, investigators for the Dutch Government and for the Royal Society of London gathered available data in an attempt to determine the reasons for the violence of this eruption, and to establish a correlation between the strange

✪ JEAN M. INGERSOLL, research analyst at Hudson Institute, Harmon-on-Hudson, New York, has drawn this article from a collection of historical instances of ecological catastrophes, prepared under the auspices of the Office of Civil Defense, Department of Defense. In their opinion, analysis of such incidents provides a better data base for predicting the ecological effects of possible thermonuclear attack upon the United States.

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atmospheric phenomena and the explosion. Somewhat belatedly biologists acted on their realization of the importance of the eruption to the study of life succession and dispersal of species, but studies begun eleven years after the event were added to at intervals and a fairly comprehensive report could be given at the time of the fiftieth anniversary of Krakatau.

Today physical data obtained in nuclear weapons tests are sometimes compared to Krakatau, and it is commonly used as an illustrative example by authors in various scientific fields. Details are given here for those who may not be familiar with the complete story of the eruption and its consequences. Parallels between well-known effects of nuclear weapons and some of the phenomena of the Krakatau eruption will readily come to mind—air shock or blast waves, intense heat, crater and cloud formations, the injection of minute particles into the atmosphere and, of course, death for those within a critical radius of the explosion.

Life was obliterated on Krakatau in 1883, yet the islands were again green with lush vegetation and rich with animal species within a surprisingly short time. Calculations made by Dr. William Brown of the Hudson Institute indicate that the minimum energy release of the eruption was at least the equivalent of a ten thousand megaton explosion—possibly as much as thirty thousand. Examination of various factors involving the question of how quickly these tropical islands would have recovered a healthy balance of nature had the devastation actually been the result of a nuclear explosion of comparable energy yield leads to the startling indication that ecological recovery might have been even more rapid from a nuclear catastrophe.

In the Sunda Strait between Sumatra and Java, within the "basal wreck" (a term applied by Darwin to the ruins of eviscerated volcanoes) of what must have been at one time a volcano of tremendous height, several volcanic mountains were thrown up to form the islands known as the Krakatau group. Located in the heart of the district long recognized as the greatest focus of volcanic activity in the world, and not far from Christmas Island, until recently a United States nuclear test site, Krakatau's position at the intersection of two great lines of volcanic fissure made it a predictable trouble spot. Here in the Indonesian archipelago humans

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live with the constant threat of death under rains of hot ash and lava from volcanic eruptions. In March of last year while gathered for a religious festival, thousands of Balinese died from burns and inhalation of lethal gases as they prayed to the god of the erupting volcano Agung; more than twenty-five thousand acres of farmland were reported permanently ruined, with an additional one hundred thousand acres considered unproductive for years to come.

When the Krakatau Islands attracted worldwide attention in 1883 the group was composed of four islands. The largest island, Krakatau, approximately twenty square miles, was made up of three volcanic cones: Rakata, more than twenty-six hundred feet; Danan, more than fourteen hundred feet; and Perboewatan, about four hundred feet. Verlaten Island, Lang Island and Poolsche-Hoed (Polish Hat), which complete the group, were probably portions of the ancient crater ring. For two centuries, following the only written report of volcanic activity in 1680, Krakatau was considered an extinct volcano. Hundreds of ships using the important commercial Sunda Strait waterway between the China Seas and the Indian Ocean passed the uninhabited island each year. Natives from neighboring islands occasionally visited it to gather wood and to fish.

It was on a Sunday, the twenty-sixth of August, that the volcano of Krakatau announced to the world that "though it was a dwarf among the numerous colossal volcanoes of the Indies, it yielded to none of them so far as power was concerned." A stupendous explosion, occurring about ten o'clock the morning of August twenty-seventh, split off the north side of the main cone of Rakata. Masses of trees, earth and rock falling into the sea, or perhaps the backlash from seawater rushing into the cavity when the cones of Danan and Perboewatan collapsed, created a gigantic wave that swept over nearby inhabited islands and low-lying coastal areas of Java and Sumatra, killing 36,380 people. The wave reached Cape Horn, over seven thousand miles away, and possibly the English Channel, more than eleven thousand miles from Krakatau. Similarly, huge waves were formed during certain shallow underwater nuclear tests carried out by the United States in Pacific lagoons, but these waves washed harmlessly over uninhabited beaches.

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The Krakatau eruptions threw enormous quantities of ash and pumice stones into the air, most of this falling into the nearby ocean. A crater more than one thousand feet below sea level was produced where the island had risen fourteen hundred feet above sea level. The sea bottom outside the great crater within a radius of ten or twelve miles was raised ten to sixty feet by debris. Verlaten Island was increased from one square mile to three square miles; Rakata appeared to have gained a square mile of debris on its southern slope; Danan and Perboewatan had disappeared. Two-thirds of the main island, or approximately thirteen square miles, had either collapsed into the magma cavity or had been blown to bits. Calculations of crater formation from a ten thousand megaton explosion give almost the same figures—the diameter of the crater would be about five miles, and the material thrown out would total approximately thirteen square miles.

A vivid impression of some immediate effects of the eruption is given by reports gathered after the event from areas surrounding Krakatau, and from ships that were in the Strait at the time.

During the nights of the twenty-sixth and the twenty-seventh sleep became impossible for residents of Java, who could not believe that the sharp detonations which sounded like nearby artillery fire could be coming from a mountain one hundred miles away. At Buitenzorg, lamps were pulled from their sockets, plaster rained from the walls and doors and windows were blown open. The sky became a yellowish-white color, and by 10:00 a.m. it was so dark lamps had to be lit. The great air pressure waves produced a prolonged sensation of deafness.

In Batavia lower temperatures were noted after 10:00 a.m. At noon and at 1:00 p.m. the difference was seven degrees centigrade with respect to temperatures noted at the same time the preceding day and the day after.

At Sérang, fifty miles away, the explosions were first heard at 3:00 p.m. Sunday. The odor of sulphur and flashes of lightning and thunder from the direction of Krakatau were noticed but little ash fell. Monday morning a fine rain of ash began to fall from a lead-colored sky and by 11:00 a.m. it was so dark that it was impossible to see ahead. Showers of tiny fragments of pumice were followed by a rain of wet ash, which stuck to leaves and branches of

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trees and broke them by its weight. At noon the mud rain was succeeded by a fall of dry ash.

From the time of the greatest explosion heard at 10:15 a.m. the twenty-seventh until 2:00 p.m. the twenty-eighth, an eerie silence at Sérang produced nervous prostration in a number of persons. Domestic animals were equally uneasy and in the houses got as close to humans and the light as they possibly could, refusing to be pushed away. Complete darkness lasted until 2:00 p.m. when a feeble light reappeared in the east and roosters began to crow. Dull explosions were heard again, ash continued to fall, and the odor of sulphur was very strong and disagreeable. At 4:00 p.m. lamps were still burning, although at that time the light was that of a twilight.

Ten ships were in the Sunda Strait or near it during the violent storm. Their reports are similar to those cited above concerning the detonations, impenetrable darkness—lighted at times by serpentine lightning flashes—suffocating odors, violent hot winds, and rains of hot ash and phosphorescent mud. "Saint Elmo's fire" danced on the masts, and several persons received electric shocks. Little holes were burned in clothing and ships' sails by hot ashes. A large number of floating bodies of men and animals and large trunks of trees were seen. Twenty-five miles from Krakatau the heat of the ash falls was so intense that people were severely burned and one death was reported resulting from it; 135 miles from the explosion a two-inch thick coat of ashes resembling snow had to be brushed from the roofs of houses to keep them from caving in under its weight.

Judged by the quantity of materials ejected, the 1883 eruption of Krakatau must have been on a much smaller scale than several other recorded explosions; the eruption of Asama in Japan in 1783 was probably greater, and the eruptions of Papandajan in Java, 1772, Skaptar Jökull in Iceland, 1783, and Tambora in Sumbawa, 1815, were all accompanied by extrusion of greater quantities of material than that thrown out of Krakatau in 1883. The special feature of the Krakatau eruption, which ejected a total of more than four cubic miles of magma and rock, appears to have been the excessively short, violent nature of the paroxysms, and the propulsion of a quantity of minute pumice particles into the

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higher atmosphere. Of the total amount ejected, probably not more than one-fourth cubic mile reached the stratosphere. This quantity is considerably more than is calculated to have been injected into the stratosphere by nuclear explosions thus far.

The pulverized pumice ejected from the volcano into the upper atmosphere to a height of seventeen to twenty-one miles is credited with causing the blue and green rayless suns and bloodred sunsets observed until 1886 not only in the immediate area but in parts of Europe, England and America. Average depth of the layers of volcanic debris on Krakatau Island was ninety-eight feet, with twice that amount in some areas. The finer dust is estimated to have fallen over an area of approximately one million square miles, which would be roughly the area covered by "local" fallout from a ten thousand megaton explosion. Noise of the Krakatau eruption was heard nearly three thousand miles away.

Unfortunately, no floral and faunal surveys were made before the great eruption, and, for that matter, biologic investigations after the eruptions were not undertaken early enough and were not of a scientific character that would allow undisputed conclusions. It was not until 1886, three years after the eruption, that a botanist visited Krakatau. This first brief botanic investigation disclosed a coast furnished with littoral plants whose seeds and fruits are borne on ocean currents for long periods without losing germinative power. In the interior, the surfaces of volcanic debris were carpeted with a slimy layer of blue-green algae. A few grasses and bushes were seen here and there. By 1919, thirty-six years after the eruption, the vegetation was similar to that found on other islands: the littoral plants, grasses, a thick undergrowth of creepers and vines, and higher up a dense forest. The principal means of floral recolonization of Krakatau is considered to have been ocean currents and the winds.

There are only scattered notes and casual records on animal repopulation of Krakatau before the first well-planned faunal investigation took place in 1908, twenty-five years after the eruption. A naturalist landing on the island a year after the eruption reported that despite intensive search he was unable to observe any sign of animal life other than a small spider busy spinning its web. The 1908 investigation resulted in the finding of some two

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hundred species of animals. A great number of spiders and centipedes, and two reptiles, the common monitor lizard and a house gecko, were found. No mammals, snakes and earthworms were seen.

Several visits were made in 1933, the fiftieth anniversary of the great eruption. Results of this research showed a total for the group of islands of more than twelve hundred faunal species, most belonging to orders of beetles, ants, bees, flies, moths, butterflies and spiders, although there were also species of birds, tardigrades, mollusks, reptiles, fish and mammals. The mammals were species of rats and bats.

There has been controversy over whether animal and plant life was annihilated by the explosion, but the preponderance of evidence supports the conclusion that it was. The intense heat of the thick beds of ash and pumice, the poisonous gases of the eruption, and hydrochloric and sulphuric acids from the condensing vapor and rainwashed ashes would kill any form of surface life. Animals that might conceivably have survived the eruptions in the shelter of cliffside crevices would have had no vegetation to feed on later. Some microscopic soil organisms can survive very high temperatures when living in a dried-up condition—nematodes to eighty degrees centigrade, rotatorians and tardigrades to one hundred fifty degrees centigrade—but the temperature of volcanic ash at the point of emission is in the neighborhood of twelve hundred degrees centigrade, and temperatures in the thick layers of ash are known to have remained extremely high. It is further pointed out that animals, such as tiger beetles, cockchafers and cicadas, which might have survived in adult or larval form deeply buried in the ground, were still absent twenty-five and even fifty years after the eruption. Maximum temperatures of nuclear devices reach tens of millions of degrees, but the heat is quickly dissipated, and except for a critical area would not affect subsurface life.

The Krakatau example is considered a negation of the long-held idea that ocean barriers are almost insurmountable obstacles to distribution of most species of animals. New arrivals on the island probably came chiefly by air. Insects, the aeroplankton as they have been called, are most numerous of the faunal population. Scavenger flies, omnivorous ants, and snails which live on detritus

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were among the first forms collected in 1908. Plant-feeders were collected systematically from 1919 on, with euryphagous species having a better chance to establish themselves than animals that live on one particular sort of plant. Insect-eating lizards and predacious snakes were slow to establish themselves and the number of species was still extremely small in 1933.

Transport by the sea is believed to have played a very modest part in the faunal recolonization of Krakatau. Reptiles probably arrived in the egg stage on driftwood; the eggs of the house gecko are often laid under tree bark or in the hollows of trees. Insects have been observed floating in ocean currents, but this means of dispersal is considered exceptional for them. Moreover, the fact that the preponderance of winged over wingless forms was abnormally high on the islands is considered evidence of the dominant role of air dispersal. The third main dispersal agent, man, was probably responsible for the introduction of rats. They were observed only after a man who had been given a concession to convert pumice stone into building material had settled on Krakatau in 1917, and might have arrived with the ship bringing his household goods. Most of the animal species found on Krakatau are so common and so widely distributed that the origin of those found could be given in only a few instances. A few species could be said with certainty to have come from Java, but the majority were of Sumatran origin.

Since volcanic and nuclear explosions follow general principles of explosions, they do produce a number of similar atmospheric effects of thermal radiation, cloud formation, shock waves and fallout of debris particles of varying sizes. The well-known mushroom cloud of nuclear explosions, which is frequently used as a symbol of the nuclear age, is actually not a feature peculiar to them. Any explosion—even from a firecracker—set off so that dirt particles or other visible debris are sucked into the ascending column of air will produce a similar cloud formation. Rising from Vesuvius in the 79 A.D. eruption, a similar cloud reminded Pliny the Younger of a stone pine tree and his designation entered the vocabulary of volcanology as the "pino" cloud, which characterizes the so-called Plinian eruptions. Cloud formations rising from Krakatau in 1883,

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and from the recent eruption of Agung in Bali, assumed this shape.

The significance of the mushroom cloud is not its form, however, but the fact that the explosion producing it may inject particles into the stratosphere. There, because of their minute size and the relative lack of air turbulence that could cause them to be brought to earth with precipitation or by gravity, they are likely to remain for a period of one to three years. The importance of these particles remaining in the stratosphere is, for those resulting from both nuclear blasts and volcanic eruptions, their possible effect on weather and, in addition, for those resulting from nuclear explosions, their radioactivity. Both of these factors, of course, could have an important, if as yet not precisely measurable, impact on many ecosystems.

Claims have been made that the debris injected into the upper atmosphere by the Krakatau eruption, which became worldwide in distribution, caused a decrease in solar radiation as well as the dramatic sky colorations observed for three years following the eruptions. But this evidence, based on the records of a single weather station in southern France, is inconclusive. As has been pointed out, up to now nuclear explosions have not injected significant amounts of fine debris into the stratosphere compared to the minimum of one-fourth cubic mile estimated to have been forced into the stratosphere by the Krakatau eruptions, and, therefore, nuclear explosions are not considered to have caused a decrease in solar radiation or changes in precipitation. It is not impossible, however, that a series of explosions deliberately designed for maximum efficiency in injecting debris into the upper atmosphere might have a significant effect on both these climatic factors. A resultant dust layer of fine particles less than two microns in diameter could decrease the amount of direct sunlight received at the earth's surface, causing a decrease in the average temperature; if prolonged, the lowered temperature could result in a major climatic change (such as severe frost in the Arizona desert). The dust layer could also create conditions leading to abnormal precipitation by providing nuclei for condensation of water vapor as the particles descend into the troposphere. That anyone would aim intentionally for such drastic meteorological effects—in turn resulting in far-reaching and perhaps uncontrollable ecological changes

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—now seems unlikely or at least very remote. The most apparent danger from debris particles injected into the stratosphere by nuclear explosions remains that of the radioactivity still present when this delayed fallout reaches the earth. At the end of two or three years, however, the decay in radioactivity would, generally speaking, reduce the hazard to that of the nuclides strontium and cesium.

Ecological devastation of Krakatau was complete in 1883: all life was annihilated principally by the baking effect over a period of months of the thick bed of extremely hot ashes. Reestablishment of its ecosystem came about through colonization from ecosystems outside the affected area. In comparison, the thermal effects of a nuclear explosion would be more nearly like those of a forest fire; beyond the crater lip of a ground burst on Krakatau, probably only surface life would be destroyed by the effects of heat, blast and initial radiation. An ecosystem would arise, therefore, based initially on regrowth from plant roots and from animals that live below the surface, although the never-ending aerial and seaborne stream of life—the spores and seeds and simple organisms that demand little of an environment to establish themselves—would hasten recovery.

Reestablishment of life on a Krakatau devastated by nuclear explosion rather than volcanic eruption, however, would have the significant difference of the factor of radioactive debris. Unfortunately, relatively little is known of the effect of radioactivity on the complex interrelationships of organisms and their environments. Indeed, radiation studies on individuals and species of both plants and animals are limited in scope and incomplete. With present knowledge it can be said that, in general, bacteria are the least radiosensitive of organisms, insects are less sensitive to radiation than vertebrates, and the lower vertebrates, such as lizards, are slightly less sensitive than mammals. (It is interesting to note, however, that the lizard population in the nuclear test area of Nevada is said to be increasing rapidly.) The highly radioactive resistant pioneer plants, blue-green algae, might then be expected to perform their colonizing role on a nuclear devastated Krakatau, just as they did on the virgin soil created by the eruption. Insects, reptiles

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and mammals might repopulate the area in much the same manner as they did following the volcanic eruption, although this would depend not only on their own sensitivity to radiation but on the sensitivity of the vegetation they feed on.

Krakatau, it should be remembered, had no human population. The some thirty-six thousand deaths resulting from the eruptions of 1883 were chiefly drownings at shore points from twenty-five to more than a hundred miles from the volcano. Population density in the same areas may be different today, but whatever the number, all would be killed within a radius of fifty miles of a ten thousand megaton explosion on Krakatau, either by drowning or from blast effects. Without protective measures against blast, thermal pulse and fallout, the casualties among those in a fifty to two hundred mile radius would be very high.

Physical devastation of Krakatau, then, by a ten thousand megaton nuclear device (so far, the largest device reported detonated is one of sixty megatons claimed by the Soviets), would be approximately the same as occurred in the 1883 eruptions. But because the baking effect of the blanket of hot ashes was more deadly than the heat from a nuclear explosion would be, because of the generally rapid rate of radioactive decay, and because recolonization and regrowth succession of plants and animals would not appear to be very different in postnuclear conditions, it seems likely that ecological recovery from a nuclear explosion of comparable energy yield might be expected in a shorter period of time than the thirty-six years it took Krakatau to recover from the volcanic eruptions of 1883.

Scientists, particularly those working on biological and ecological problems of radioactivity in the environment, must cope with all aspects of these problems, whether they are created through peaceful uses of nuclear energy or by the catastrophe of nuclear war. The Krakatau example and other analogous studies may contribute in a general way to a realistic appraisal of possible ecological disruption and recovery in postnuclear environments.

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Children and Racial Demonstrations

ROBERT COLES

WE HAVE SEEN and doubtless will continue to see Negro children take prominent roles in racial demonstrations all over this country. Increasing editorial attention—much of it critical—has been given to this fact as more and more of these children appear before us, walking through mobs to enter school buildings or marching alone or with their parents to protest their exclusion from so very much of the life of so very many of our communities. There should indeed be concern about how these children come to share in their race's present struggle and what happens to them when they do. The question needs study rather than quick, if well-intentioned, dismay or outrage.

Before going any further, I would like to put in words what I believe my own feelings on this matter might well be at this time were it not for the kind of work I have been doing for the past few years. Faced with their participation in demonstrations in Birmingham, Alabama, or Englewood, New Jersey, I would probably say something like this: "It is a cruel and terrible thing that those children—and others like them elsewhere—should enter this vicious struggle. Those Southern children are being used and abused, endangered or subjected to the physical and emotional hurt of exposure to racist mobs or basically racist police. In the North they are losing the regularity and protection of valuable school time in pursuing what is an adult job, and a hard one even for them." Yet I cannot now state the matter so unequivocally.

For the past three years I have been studying young people of the South—white and Negro—as they initiate various kinds of social change, from entering desegregated schools to picketing

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lunch counters, libraries or town office buildings. Trained as a psychiatrist, I first became acquainted with the South by living in Mississippi for two years as a member of the Air Force Medical Corps. Before that time as a resident in child psychiatry I had been interested not in social stress, but in medical stress—the reactions of children to acute poliomyelitis.

My life in Mississippi and adjacent Louisiana was largely pleasant, filled with many long mild days marked by splendid sunrises and sunsets along the Gulf of Mexico, and an astonishing richness of game and plant life. People moved more slowly than in the North, to my ear spoke more warmly and politely—that flat, metallic Boston accent I had grown to call my own seemed a sad alternative—and even in the late 1950's social tensions had yet to reach that far South with their new urgency.

It was at the very end of my stay South that I saw the first sit-ins by college students, and it was shortly thereafter, back for my first New England winter, that I read of the social riots in New Orleans precipitated by four Negro girls of six going into two once white schools. My old interest in children under stress was stimulated by this moment in our national life which found children seeking or taking on a variety of stressful roles in one social and political crisis after another; and so I returned South, this time living in Atlanta, where I could observe school desegregation as it developed, meeting weekly with the nine pioneering Negro youths and with a like number of their white classmates. From Atlanta I traveled to New Orleans for monthly interviews with the four Negro girls, a few others who followed their steps the next year, and a handful of their white schoolmates and teachers. I moved elsewhere over the South in those years, devoting a good deal of time to talking with young people involved in the sit-in movement and segregationists who were opposing desegregation through organizations and demonstrations of their own.

When I decide to talk about the role of these children in social protest, when I view their actions in the South historically and describe their adjustment psychiatrically, I have to remind myself that the very word "child" is confusing. At the turn of the century the labor movement asked for "a childhood for every child." Many

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of these Negro "children" still lack that "right." Is a sixteen-year-old boy who has lived in stark, unremitting poverty, worked since eight, earned a living since fourteen, married at fifteen, and is soon to be a father, a "child"? If I started my research fearing for the successful psychological survival of such "children," *whose* children—sons and daughters of our white educated middle class—did I think they were? ("We're tough," a Negro lad of fifteen told me in an Alabama jail. "They're tough," his white jailer told me soon afterwards, and he added very casually, "They have to be to survive.")

Still no matter how hard the lives of these demonstrators, many of them are young indeed to be initiating such responsible, non-violent protests, to be leaders in social change. Moreover, they are acting in a region that considers them not merely children but, as Negroes, the children of children. They persist in spite of retaliatory arrests, brutalities and jailings, and without discernible psychiatric harm or collapse. Modern psychiatry must certainly ask why children subjected to such strains survive so handily; and modern history has no precedent for children directly involving themselves at their own behest in an attempt to change the social and political structure of the adult. In fact, over our entire Western history only the Children's Crusade compares with what is now happening, and priests both prompted and led those children of the thirteenth century.

Children have a special place in this country's culture, one reason being that we ourselves as a nation are so young and oriented toward "youthfulness." "Everyone tries to play sixteen," I heard once from a girl not very happy with that age and incredulous at its attractions for those who have long since left it. Large numbers of us are also wealthy enough to offer our young more protection and comfort than they can find in any other nation. While most children all over the world are born with grim odds for adult survival, the majority of our children have the assurance of our plentiful statistics that theirs will likely be the Biblical three score and ten.

But if our middle-class young have been protected, when they become older and enter high schools and colleges they receive no

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immunity from criticism. Social scientists question their morals, call them "alienated" (their elders were "lost") and, in contrast to their contemporaries in other lands, "nonideological." Ironically, in their own country some of their contemporaries, emerging largely from far less fortunate circumstances, also stand in contrast to them by taking active roles in a serious social crisis, in school desegregation and in protests against unjust racial practices.

We read of them daily. "Juveniles" some of the papers call them. They are called "boys and girls" or "high school students" by those who would simply describe them, or "delinquents" and worse by some of their critics. They have ranged from grammar school youngsters of eight or ten, walking hands clasped in those of their parents, to a large number of adolescent youths whose actions are very much their own. While their participation in the Birmingham demonstrations attracted national attention, young Negroes, sometimes joined by young whites, have been picketing or spontaneously conducting sit-ins for several years. I know of several towns in the more northerly South where libraries and drugstores were desegregated by junior high and high school children to the surprise of their own parents. The white librarian of one town told me that she never could turn children away from books, but only a few years ago her reluctance might not have been so easily indulged.

It is difficult to discover the sources of the initiative taken by these young people. A common charge is that they are "brought out" by conspiring adults. Often it is quite the contrary: nervous parents are afraid to let their children participate in the initially tense months of school desegregation, let alone the constant uncertainties of street demonstrations. For example, half of the children who initiated Atlanta's token desegregation of its schools in 1961 had to work hard for their parents' consent before they could take on the additional reluctance of the city's school board.

It was not easy for me as a white psychiatrist to get to know such facts, let alone learn more generally the emotional ties and strains at play in Negro families. It is easier to observe them sociologically, then categorize: they are matriarchal families whose members are underprivileged, ill-educated people, relatively de-

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prived of cultural traditions and roots. Even descriptions of the anger and frustration common to most of these families may fail to account for the origin of these feelings in the special, grinding humiliations constantly faced. We may easily understand a Negro's instant anger before a threatening state trooper, but fail to see that from their first years Negro children must learn who they are, where they may not go, what they most probably will be and cannot be. Such lessons of reality become psychological facts—surely as important as social and economic ones—which determine the child's sense of his own worth, his sense of the power of those who define his worth, and, consequently, of their worth.

If the Negro child's life is one of having to learn how to confront a future of unrelenting harassment, his intimidated parents must prepare him for it. They must teach their child a variety of maneuvers and postures to cope with his baffling lot. By seven or eight most Negro children know the score, and I have seen them draw only faintly disguised pictures of the harsh future awaiting them. Yet such a future can be either harsh and purposeless or harsh but at least with some promise that the pain endured will contribute to the eventual end of its causes. Put another way, suffering can have its own neutrality; any physician sees wounds from assault that resembles ones inflicted by surgeons.

Until now nonviolence has come naturally to Negroes, because the only choice has been turning their suffering in upon themselves, converting it to sullen despair. Negroes are not becoming angry. They have always been angry. We are fortunate that for the moment their anger has found constructive expression. Other kinds have been shown waiting in the wings, fierce reminders that the real alternative to the remarkable lack of impulsivity and fragility in these children is the violence, delinquency and addiction of some of their more injured peers or elders.

Suffering also can ignore the color line. In a sense white and Negro children have more in common with each other than with their parents. They share an historical moment that can be painful to them regardless of race. I have watched white school children in the South suffer with shame as they slowly begin to realize what Negro classmates must endure. Even some frantic segregationists

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experience guilt, an unconscious kind which sometimes accumulates large enough in a particular child to change his racial attitudes. Most Southerners simply turn away, in apathy or defensive rationalizations; or they watch. They watch in surprise as these Negro youths contain themselves under the repeated provocation of hecklers. "Where did they ever learn to behave like that?" I was asked by a white girl of seventeen who watched her town's police club a Negro girl two years her junior. She went on to express her covert sympathy with the girl by saying, "I don't think any girl of her age really wants to cause trouble."

Yet there are records of violence and antisocial behavior from children, both younger and older than that Negro girl, which go back into the Middle Ages and persist through our time. School children once were armed, and the word "truant," which I hear applied to so many Negro children trying to become American citizens, comes from a Latin word describing a wandering student. Such youths were readily accepted by many societies until their freedom slowly began to threaten the more stable order of life demanded by the rising bourgeoisie. The nineteenth century, that sober era when upper-class children were most precious and least indulged, was amply touched by juvenile crime and violence. The earliest records of the Children's Aid Society of New York (founded in 1854) mention many instances of both. Across the seas student groups—such organizations as Young Italy and Young France of the 1830's and 40's—were forming the rebellious vanguard to spreading nationalism. Today's protesting Negro youths, despite their supposed lack of "civilization" and their susceptibility—even if at a segregated distance—to twentieth-century liberalism, with all its supposed encouragement to lowered standards for obedience, are much less violent and wild, much more controlled or "repressed" than their nineteenth-century counterparts in Western Europe; and despite the hardships of their race's special exploitation, they seem no less sturdy.

Indeed, there are no easy correlations between parental ideology, class or race and "successful" child development. Many children the world over have revealed a kind of toughness and plasticity under far from favorable conditions that make the determined

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efforts of some parents to spare their children the slightest pain seem quite ironic. Despite our wealth and its advantages for our children, despite our constant interest in their "welfare," we so far have produced no general flowering of humanity. Of course middle-class breast-beating is always tempting, and can be easily justified by a glance at our all too numerous hoody, self-indulgent youths. In contrast, the affluent section of our society has also produced—in the Peace Corps, in the Northern college youths who have joined the civil rights movement—a remarkable kind of idealistic youth, many of whom have achieved their own virtue by rejecting their parents' too obvious materialism. Similarly, I have come to know reliable and productive Negro children from the most desolate homes. Their parents are tired, beaten, and sometimes very unattractive in speech and action. But such parents produce their fair share of delinquent children, too.

For some time students of literature and psychology have tried in bewilderment to understand paradoxes like Dostoevski's early traumas and Kafka's terribly twisted childhood. Lives such as theirs illustrate more than the triumph of genius over illness. They are exceptional examples of how very hard it is—or should be for us in our present state of knowledge—to define the sources of "health," "creativity," or "maturity" in many people. We see the wide behavioral variations of children from relatively similar neighborhoods. We are struck by the common cause and ethical commitment of children from widely divergent ones. Growth in children seemingly challenges as well as responds to a wide and complicated assortment of influences—social, economic, psychological.

What has happened to children who have endured the special hells of our modern civilized world—its wars and devastated villages, its concentration camps and prisons, its two nuclear bombs? These disasters have generated a genre of books that discuss the impact of various modern barbarities upon children. The titles and their subject matter evoke the recent past: *War and Children* by Anna Freud and Dorothy Burlingham, on British children under the blitz; *Children in Bondage,* essays on child life in Nazi-occupied Europe; *The Hunted Children* by Donald Lowrie, on the rescue of the young from the Gestapo; *Polish Children Suffer* by

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Witold Majewski, a description of how Polish and Jewish children managed under the Nazis—and fought them hard; *Children of the A-Bomb* by Arata Osada and *Children of the Ashes* by Robert Jungk, describing what happened to the children who survived our most sophisticated and ruinous form of war; and there are many others.

These books tell us much about the inner resources of children. The files of American and European newspapers are also informative. Take the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* of June 7, 1941: "Children between the ages of seven and thirteen are committing offenses against the occupying forces which must be called crimes." (Strangely familiar words to anyone who has read certain of our Southern newspapers.) Throughout Nazi-occupied Europe children shared in the Underground—the term "Children's Front" was used by many to describe their participation.[1] Unlike our Negro children they were following their parents and teachers; and impressively so. They boycotted Quisling's teachers in Norway; they sang songs of protest in Danish schools; they helped derail German trains in Holland; and even murdered Gestapo agents in France. Their German conquerors imposed upon them the new and fastidious scholarship of "raceology" (*Rassenkunde*), and they outwardly submitted. But not fully, or not really; and at the first possible moment, not at all.

Confused and hurt, many children in war, prisons or nuclear holocaust showed astonishing resourcefulness and a fast maturity before disaster. Fighting for survival, waifs in the wake of atomic bombs or Nazi armies formed gangs to seek out food and shelter, to support one another. Years later we hear them recalling their common trauma and marvel at their clear and comprehending words, at their capacity for reflection and expression of feeling.[2] The bestiality and terror of German concentration camps destroyed young children. Yet a veteran of four of these camps writes about older children in the camps whose early emotional development was more secure: "There is another side of the coin. Those of us

[1] Otto Zoff, *They Shall Inherit the Earth* (New York: John Day, 1943).

[2] *Children of the A-Bomb*, The Testament of the Boys and Girls of Hiroshima, compiled by Dr. Arata Osada (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1963).

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who are caught up in the Nazi web . . . have learned something in the camp that no other form of education could have given us. We have learnt the value of freedom and of life itself."[3] Some comfortable American youths complain bitterly that they lack such knowledge, have never learned such lessons.

We need not *recommend* adversity (there is world enough and time), but we also so far have to live with the definition of its opposite—contentment and happiness—still elusive. Nor can we forget that adversity has an ageless participation in the lives of most people, and one that cannot be extracted from the context of those lives and judged by itself. We can all agree that we oppose mobs, and children facing them, but if children must face them, let us find out why, and what will happen to them if they don't. When we find out what happens if they don't protest, we will find out about children in daily subjection who have been asked to forfeit their freedom by the decision that they must endure tyranny rather than face "danger" or "trauma" and do so at a time when endurance is hardly a necessity. What can be worse psychologically and spiritually for any child? When we find out what happens when these children *do* protest, there is no neat correlation between external hardship and internal collapse. Dr. Martin Luther King has said, "Undeserved suffering is redemptive." I would merely add that I have seen precious little psychiatric illness attached to such redemption.

Of course, until recently we would not even be concerning ourselves with the special vulnerability of these "children." In a remarkable book, *Centuries of Childhood,* Philippe Ariès has shown that from the Middle Ages to the seventeenth century children were weaned late, but then went very directly, at about the age of seven or eight, into the world of adults. They were often entrusted to strangers who worked or taught them and presumed them grown, little grown-ups yes, but responsible ones, and sharing in the tasks and play of the community. We often forget that Joan of Arc was seventeen at her most notorious and adored. Romeo and Juliet, lovers at fourteen, seem perhaps older to us today. To

[3] From "Children of Auschwitz" by Eugene Heimler in *Prison,* a symposium edited by George Mikes (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963).

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their world they were adults, and so were the children who in the same century reputedly followed the Pied Piper as well as itinerant priests to the Holy Land.

Starting in the seventeenth century, children were asked to relinquish widening shares of their adulthood to return to the newly developed protection of middle-class families and schools, both of which became full-fledged institutions in the sense we now know them relatively late in Western history, really in the past two hundred years. These are the same years in which we find children known as such at later ages than ever before. Their legal definition now includes about three earlier spans of childhood. These are also the years that have pressed upon the child not merely a narrowing latitude of freedom but increasing preoccupation with him and his life by the adult world.

Historians and sociologists have correlated much of this trend with the rise of complex industrial societies. These societies valued property and privacy; and the new classes emerging within them were self-conscious and often sharply separated from one another. A world supported by intricately divided and specialized labor needed widespread education for some of its young, and time for this to be accomplished. Labor, and sheer labor at that, was also at a premium. By the nineteenth century in Britain and in our own country, children were both extravagantly idealized as the repository of all wisdom, as by Wordsworth, and ruthlessly exploited. In earlier times children were seen more realistically; they didn't have to be idealized. Likewise, children working in Victorian mines and factories were not youthful medieval adults in pursuit of an apprenticeship but faceless property which their poor, horrified parents suddenly found themselves possessing.

In contrast the middle classes became intent upon fulfilling their destiny. They found in their children a significant mirror of their own identity, an element of their own lives which could be consolidated and perpetuated. No wonder the reality of childhood, and thereby its meaning and experience for many of us today, slowly changed. From *Pamela* to *Emile* and with strong if less artistic continuation in Dr. Spock, we have speculated intensively about how to rear our children, as if their outcome was our fate

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and their perfect outcome both possible and the clue to our immortality.

In a sense childhood has for some of our educated middle class become a focus of a final "ideology." Their world is darkly threatening. God and various Utopias have disappointed them. "I don't believe in anything but my children," I remember hearing from a lawyer whose child I was treating for some emotional difficulties. The father had grown up in a world that considered children part of life going on rather than the only hope in an uncertain world plagued by nuclear fallout, racial disorders, middle-class delinquency, and the various confusions of a technological and bureaucratic society. True, *his* parents were immigrants, and he was for them a kind of hope, a living forecast of a new and better life, if not for themselves, then surely for their young. But as parents they would not struggle alone. The boy was to become a lawyer, so he would have to work hard, give up pleasures, deny himself. Strains upon children were not calculated and then lamented, perhaps because the good life was too near grasp to worry about anything but its final possession. His parents' dreams and his own hard, painful effort have now become his child's surfeit and, to some extent, ironic burden. What he wants for his children is that they be spared, given the "best" education and protected from all kinds of turmoil. Tensions, whether they be those of private or social origin, are "bad" for children. His child's "mental health" is a source of concern to him, and also the "environment" in which he grows—he must live in a nice neighborhood, be treated by parents and teachers alike in certain careful ways. The father, I felt, was more interested in what was good *for* his child than what good he might ask *of* him. And the child's problem was that he didn't quite know, after all, what was "good" and what was "bad," what he could do, and what he must not do. Once he might have been called "fresh," "spoiled" and "wild," but now he was "impulsive" and had a "problem." He did have a problem; and its complex nature, I fear, is not merely psychological, but sociological, and ethical as well.

Meanwhile, most Negro families, in contrast to some of those in our educated white middle class, still believe in the Bible, have yet to become disenchanted with what very little they possess, and are

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still hoping for more, although with few illusions about when they will see their dreams realized, at least on this earth. Unlike other immigrant groups who came to this country with hope, if no other property, the Negro has lived here all the while. His own special, native American condition has been so low, so apart that he was largely unaware that others were arriving and quickly moving upward to pass him by.

Regardless of *our* ideas about Negro youths and what they think and believe or how they should behave in their childhood, most of the students I know are surprisingly little concerned with ideology, and their parents even less so. With more success these parents and children will have the various choices that make thinking and planning appropriate. "Right now," one of them grimly told me, "I don't do much figuring, and I don't worry about what's going to happen to me. I just try to get into those lunch counters, and my parents, they don't much care one way or the other. I mean they do, but they don't know, to tell the truth, what we're doing." Moreover, it is an ironic fact that many Negro children have had much wider latitude in street play than their white counterparts. There has been until recently much less reason for a Negro parent to restrict his child to study and discipline. This very "freedom" of the poor child whose parents do not have faith in the future has allowed some of these children to make their very spontaneous street demonstrations.

To many of these children their parents have not merely lost hope, but are deeply compromised by virtue of their long, if historically necessary, submission to the white world. If I needed instruction on the ways Negro leaders—college presidents, businessmen, ministers, political leaders—have had to truckle to their white counterparts, then go wearily homeward with their pittance, these youths have given it eagerly and bitterly. In a sense these students are their race's first truly independent spokesmen, asserting a critical role, one perhaps unique in America, toward the Negro adult community similar to that played by students in other countries where education is rare, and freedom is being newly sought or has only recently been won.

I have said that these demonstrations—picketing stores and

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braving the subsequent white "justice" of hoses, dogs, truncheons, electric prodding poles, courtrooms, trials, jails, criminal records—do not necessarily cause psychological collapse or psychiatric symptoms in these teen-aged youths. I have stressed that we must understand their behavior in its meaning for them. Yet, when we try to evaluate the meaning of their behavior for us, we often flounder in our own problems. We are a generation that looks very carefully at motives. The most common interest I hear from many concerned people is one that asks what *kind* of person takes on this hard life of protest, of demonstration and frequent arrest. Such curiosity is partly related to our fear that these youths will be hurt by the trials they assume. But our upper middle-class culture is more generally curious about why people do things—and which people do what things. It is anxious to use such knowledge, too, for its children's sake. Tentative psychological hypotheses become for many a code of dogmatically held rights and wrongs, to be assiduously implemented in the child's training and education, in the general atmosphere that surrounds him.

Well, who are these "children" and what are their motives? They are all kinds—seekers, wanderers and rebels; children who are men, young men sometimes acting in very childish ways (they are not always demonstrating, but they *are* always human). How do they compare with youths the world over? Like them they have restless energy and spells of anxious hesitation. Like them they seek expression and may in moments fear it, too. Some of them are controlled and studious, and others are delighted, if a bit surprised, to find themselves *both* lawbreakers and heroes. Every year high schools and colleges all over the world witness school riots, "panty raids," or youths engaged in clamorous political activities based upon widely different ideological convictions. Delinquency is worldwide, and class wide, too. The Mayor of Nairobi recently remarked upon its occurrence there. It plagues the Borstal boys in England as well as our own young, those from slums to those in elegant suburbs. How do we compare the youthful spirit that causes a destructive riot in Princeton with that which caused the young white students in Oxford, Mississippi, to shout their vulgar defiance of Federal law? In a Northern city I recently watched a

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group of youths about fourteen or fifteen years old scream various obscenities at a Negro couple moving into their neighborhood. What marked off their impulses, motivations and problems from those of the youthful Negro and white demonstrators in the South or North?

Some of the differences are clear. Many of those youths taking part in racial demonstrations are better integrated psychologically as well as racially. They act out of deep moral convictions, and in a spirit of sensitivity and thoughtfulness. In contrast, other youths, in Oxford or Chicago, are squalid, mindless toughs, acting out of careless impulsivity. But for many of both groups the differences are less psychological than social and cultural. Young men and women whom we today might call "children" fought on *both* sides in the Civil War; Napoleon had his brave drummer boys; and English children read of a boy who was a hero in the Battle of Jutland. I am personally appalled by the deep convictions, and idealistic fervor stimulated by these convictions, I have seen not only in many of our segregationist youths in the South, but near Birchite ones in the North and West. I doubt very much, however, whether we shall find a final judgment upon these youths that rests upon psychiatric analysis of motives, and if a small but influential segment of our society asks for it too exclusively, that is a problem in itself. The judgment will be made upon deed, will consider personality structure less than ethics, will have to be made in the light of history, or before God, or before our secular moral sensibilities.

Whatever their motives, these hopeful children of the sit-ins are not willing to accept the prevailing values of a segregated society. They are committed to action, dedicated to affirming new values. Their actions are what make them guileless and powerfully innocent, and their actions occurring in our particular time; because it is this very time that is their essential catalyst, enabling them to strike out and claim, successfully, once forbidden territory. They have not been the first Negro youths to dream of freedom, to want cafeteria coffee, to covet revenge. They are not the first to delight in their parents' anxiety and fear and try for their own social action. If they are white, they are not the first youths to flout powerful customs and try to build their very own. Until recently,

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however, many children died young, families were more authoritarian in structure, social controls were perhaps firmer in societies not only more simple and compact, but further apart in time and space. Until recently, moreover, the Negro was not free enough, or secure enough even to conceive of the true security of real freedom. Now he is; it is a mere beginning, but a crucial and historic one. In all its social, political and cultural senses, the historical moment allows the translation of the possible or potential into the actual. The chance for such translation is strikingly similar to the conditions that seem to make some individuals more able and productive than others. After all, the chief complaint of most of our mentally ill is not that life is hard, or even painful, but that it is both of these without a sense of fulfillment—their dreams seem out of touch with the reality of their lives. As psychiatrists we must help our patients understand their dreams and help them dream other dreams, those sensible and realistic ones that we now call "goals." But goals must find their destiny, and this destiny will always be outside our offices, in the midst of the world and its particular moment and nature.

These children who protest and demonstrate want for themselves what in this country is no scarcity for many others—freedom and work, a share in our wealth, a proper place in our social and cultural life. Since the beginning of history racism has afflicted many corners of our earth. Vast armies have moved from continent to continent, tribes and castes have moved within continents, conquering and in turn being conquered. The United States is the first country founded on the exile of those from other nations, and it is now the first country to begin to come to terms with genuine freedom and equality across racial lines for so large a number of people. It is not an easy job, and at times we look across history in heavy guilt. Yet these children in their present irrepressible confrontation of all of us are very much part of us. There is something historically special about what they are doing, and politically special about how they are doing it; and I would think something very "healthy," too, for them and for their country as a democracy. They are forcing us to face our proper destiny.

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POEMS

CONSTANCE CARRIER

It Was Your Face I Saw

It was your face I saw
on that first day of seeing—
but I remember now
how marigolds were being
brushed by the sun, and blown
against the window pane.

It was your face I saw,
father and son and lover—
but I remember now
the grey heat-sluggish river
and the great grey tree-trunk
dead on the river bank.

It was your face I saw
made strange by grief and anger—
but I remember now
the infinite soft languor
of the May air, the riot
of bloom, the sudden quiet.

It was your face I saw
before I went forth blind—
but I remember now
all that the restless mind
recorded unaware:
and your face nowhere there.

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Laudare

Death. let me praise you now
while I have breath to praise
the dark on which I measure
the brightness of my days.

O lapidary death
who cut and faceted
this diamond I hold
that else were glass instead—

O contrapuntal death,
resolving every chord;
the soundless antiphon.
the dominant restored—

O necromancer death
who charms my love from me—
what lover's faith compares
to your fidelity?

Let me then praise you now;
let me all homage give
to this my master death,
by whose dark grace I live.

✪ CONSTANCE CARRIER teaches Latin in West Hartford, Connecticut. In 1954 she was given the Lamont Award for a collection of verse called *The Middle Voice*. This fall the Indiana University Press published her translation of Propertius.

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The Public Library: The People's University?

KATHLEEN MOLZ

HE loved this street, not for the people or the shops but for the stone lions that guarded the great main building of the Public Library, a building filled with books and unimaginably vast, and which he had never yet dared to enter. He might, he knew, for he was a member of the branch in Harlem and was entitled to take books from any library in the city. But he had never gone in because the building was so big that it must be full of corridors and marble steps, in the maze of which he would be lost and never find the book he wanted. And then everyone, all the white people inside, would know that he was not used to great buildings, or to many books, and they would look at him with pity. He would enter on another day, when he had read all the books uptown, an achievement that would, he felt, lend him the poise to enter any building in the world.

So slight is this incident from James Baldwin's *Go Tell It on the Mountain* that many readers will not even remember it, but the librarian finds himself pausing. For what is described here is a child denying himself freely offered access to literacy—not because he rejects it, but because he feels it may reject him. Intimidated by the marble citadel, the youngster plays "truant," waiting for "another day" to invade the alien culture on Forty-second Street.

The episode is bothersome, for the librarian cannot help asking: why is the child so overawed, and why do so many of his

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family, his neighbors, his people overlook the opportunites of an institution that benefited most from a Pittsburgh mill boy who recalled in his maturity the painful cultural deprivation of his youth? Across the country in many large metropolitan centers, librarians uneasily watch the staggering increase of an illiterate and near-illiterate population, desperately in need of library service, but seemingly unmindful that it exists.

The popular catch-phrase to describe the public library has been "the people's university." For over a century the American public library has been considered a place for *continuing* education, where the child could traverse terrain beyond the textbook and the adult could learn without the stricture of curriculum and classroom. Although relatively unimportant in the political spectrum, the library exacted its support from the community on the basis of two axioms: one, reading is good, and two, everyone should read.

The first influenced the library's collection, for if reading was good, then only the best should be provided. Consequently, the ephemeral, the unauthoritative, the tasteless were, and still are, rejected in favor of meritorious and significant books. Even the phrase common to the librarian, "weeding the collection," still carries with it the implications of a well-pruned garden where only the sturdiest or most beautiful plants are allowed to survive. The second principle, derived from the American egalitarian ideal, influenced the library's service, and led to its extension through branch libraries in cities, bookmobiles in rural areas, and even to the ailing and handicapped, through hospital carts.

Good books for many readers was the librarian's creed, and little has altered it since Charles Jewett addressed the first convention of librarians in 1853 by saying: "We meet to provide for the diffusion of knowledge of good books and for enlarging the means of public access to them." Yet times change, even if creeds do not, and within the last year, librarians, especially those in the largest cities, have been severely criticized for their ineffectiveness in attracting would-be readers from the lower class.

In May of 1963, representatives from libraries in a score of the nation's largest cities participated in a symposium devoted to

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library functions in the changing metropolis.* The papers, given for the most part by urban specialists—including political scientists, city planners, economists and sociologists—all echoed the same theme: the metropolitan library is "an alien, strange, bookish, intellectual institution . . . a place for 'squares' and 'brains.'"

As the social scientists described it, the public library in the modern American city is now finding itself serving a non-print-oriented community. Its former readers are moving away to suburban areas, where they become the borrowers of the smaller county library, administered separately from the urban library system. The exiles to suburbia leave in their stead a community of non-library users, who are either non-English speaking or so culturally disadvantaged that the educational or even recreational advantages of reading have no relevance to their lives.

In July, just two months later, the American Library Association issued a report, compiled by a social science research team, entitled *Access to Public Libraries*. This document pointed out that low-income and nonwhite families did not receive as much service from the metropolitan library as did those of higher income and better education. Although there was considerable discussion, and some dissension, as to the merits of the methodology used to determine this factor, the report once again emphasized that the metropolitan library was being indirectly indicted for its failure to reach the lower-class residents of the modern core city.

The identification of the public library as a middle-class institution, inherent in both the conference and the report, seemed in some ways unfair to the library profession, for the modern library not only derives from, but even incorporates, the early apprentice and mechanics libraries, founded for the very purpose of encouraging the reading of lower-class and working-class youth. Understandably proud of the library's part in easing the cultural assimilation of numerous immigrants, librarians also recall the turn-of-the-century classes for the foreign-born held throughout city library systems. What has been more difficult for them to

*The Symposium on Library Functions in the Changing Metropolis sponsored by the Joint Center for Urban Studies of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University, and the National Book Committee at Endicott House, Dedham, Massachusetts.

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understand is that the present-day influx of migrant American workers into the nation's urban areas differs significantly from the mass migration of the nineteenth century. Arriving in this country with a commitment to learning as the first rung on the advancement ladder, the foreigner saw nothing inappropriate in the marble maze of the public library since it was, after all, imitative of some European model. But architecture alone cannot be held responsible for cultural alienation, and librarians would probably rejoin that glass and tile, however attractive, cannot make people read.

If the assumption that libraries have lost touch with the lower class is correct, then more tangible grounds have to be found to substantiate it. A more cogent explanation is the subtle and recent transformation of the "people's university" into the "students' university." Within the last few years, the greatly increased school population collided with the "materials-oriented" curriculum which places its emphasis on "related readings" to precipitate a wave of eager young researchers into the nation's libraries. According to some estimates, student use now accounts for sixty to sixty-five percent of public library patronage. Especially hard hit were the large city libraries, whose resources were taxed by students, not only those resident in the city, but also the suburban spillovers unable to locate the requisite material in their county libraries.

Although traditionally considered an institution for informal learning, the library is now propelled into serving as an adjunct to the school system, purchasing multiple copies of books on required reading lists, and deepening the research and reference facilities not only of the central library but also of a number of key branch or regional libraries situated strategically throughout the city. The problems of student use have been thoroughly enumerated, but effective solutions will take years to be accomplished. Caring most about the ends of his search rather than its means, the student naturally gravitates to the library that has what he wants. With no school libraries in over half of the nation's elementary schools and with a serious paucity of significant book collections in many junior college and college libraries, the large city public

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library will continue to be used by an accelerated student population.

In itself, student use presents no serious dilemma. Its complexity is best understood only when placed in the perspective of the library's second axiom: everyone should read. For as the library increases its holdings of research materials in the form of abstracts, documents, statistical compilations, governmental data, *et cetera,* it also increases the student's difficulty in finding what he needs, and his requests for guidance in the use of this material will tend to augment proportionately. Asked to balance the insistent questions of a would-be statistician or physicist with the often inarticulate demands of the near-illiterate, the librarian feels remotely like an inept juggler, his eye on two balls, entertaining no real hope of catching either the one or the other.

No more brilliant spokesman for the present crisis facing the public library has been found than Dan Lacy, managing director of the American Book Publishers Council. As one of the participants in the conference referred to above, he articulated for the librarians present the inequitable distribution of the nation's intellectual wealth. Now more than ever, literacy becomes the basis of economic survival, and the chasm widening between the haves and have-nots of American society parallels the gap between the effectively literate and the uneducated. Although cognizant that increased services by already overtaxed public libraries may be "tragically impossible," Mr. Lacy, nevertheless, proposed that the public library serve as an instrument to translate to the book publishing industry the largely unexpressed needs of the deprived, thereby creating a demand that would make the publication of materials suitable for minimally-educated adults economically feasible. In turn, the library would provide a market for such publications by distributing them to a now nonreading group. Valuable in itself, the proposal was equally important because it raised serious questions concerning the social responsibilities of the library and the direction that it must take in the decades ahead.

Like that marvelous "stone soup," which was concocted because everyone dropped in the tureen some hidden delicacy, the public library is now overflowing with highly respectable projects. Stirred

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together by the library ladle are the continuing education of the already educated, the research needs of the scholarly, the services particularly arranged for child, young adult, aging. But this new challenge, service to the functionally illiterate, requires more than the deposit of one more carrot into the soup. It means that the library profession has to take stock of its creed, and reexamine those two axioms on which its public service was based. For "good" reading meant not merely a utilitarian assemblage of facts; it stood for the profession's commitment to inculcate and develop in the individual patron a peculiar pleasure, the pleasure derived from *living* with books, browsing through them, making notes from them, even owning them. Almost all library activities were predicated on this pleasure, and the implicit faith that the reader, if properly guided, would gradually move upward from casual, light reading into the more purposeful sphere known as "the world of books."

This is not to imply any naïveté on the part of the profession. Of course, failure was expected, but at the same time hope was never quite abandoned that someday the goal of a better-educated society might be realized. But the culturally deprived of today's cities are not on the bottom of a ladder; they do not even know that one exists. If reading for everyone, the second principle of service, is still relevant to the modern library, then the cultural content of the "good" book collection has to be reassessed, and room made for less sophisticated materials that will lead the patron not upward into literature, but outward into a literate world where jobs are found, bus schedules and street maps understood, and children's report cards read.

This reorientation will not come easily, for the subject specialist in the urban public library, geared to selecting the more notable book in a given field, will look with no small alarm at the simplified accounts of history, civics and mathematics, to be made available for undereducated adults. Fiction, now being purchased only if certain standards of literary excellence are met, may have to be less qualitatively evaluated when the limited reading skills of the deprived are considered. The prevailing processing policy which limits the number of paperbacks purchased by libraries

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(since they do not hold up as well as hardbound books) may be moderated, and cheaply produced books even sold through library outlets. The current practice of dividing libraries into subject areas could conceivably change, and the idea of a "popular library," a reading room that cuts across subject lines, revived. Also affected will be the formal education of librarians, for the librarian *qua* social worker will need training in working with this largely unmotivated group of people just as the bibliographer and cataloguer now need to learn the skills required for the assimilation and arrangement of books.

There are dangers to this course, and some librarians will view these changes as a downgrading of standards leading the library into a cultural no-man's-land, discouraging to the pursuants of high culture, ambiguous to the general readership, and ineffective to the undereducated. But libraries do not create communities, they merely serve them, and when contemporary society is itself divisive, split now between an upper and lower economic stratification, then cultural cohesion, by contrast, seems artificial and contrived.

For the total illiterate, the city library can do almost nothing. Its contribution will come in serving those with at least a few years of schooling. Nor will it, of course, carry the burden of this responsibility alone; the welfare agencies and the urban schools will contribute greatly. But the library has a singular, if small, advantage in this undertaking. Its concentration of purpose makes it less diversified than the social welfare agency which copes with a broad range of domestic problems. And its informality of service makes it less structured than the school which requires a modicum of formality in registration and enrollment. Therefore it can wage its war specifically on illiteracy and cultural apathy, and it can carry on its campaign anywhere. Even now, a librarian works in the blighted areas of the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn. Freed of all administrative duties, he spends his entire week working with community organizations, institutions and individuals in an effort to motivate more people to use their public libraries. But where hundreds are needed, one foot soldier, however proficient, is hardly enough. The Brooklyn project, and others like it in pur-

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pose if not in method, serve, however, as minor barometers of the changing atmosphere in the library profession. Mindful of its tradition in upholding standards of excellence, the profession is now becoming equally conscious that standards of "good" books, and "notable" books, and "best" books are relative, dependent on who is reading what, and where and how.

Formerly the library made its peace with the community by freely offering its resources to any comer. But now, with an almost untapped market of poorly educated consumers, the library must contribute to the making of its resources, and motivate the user into wanting them. It is a tall order, and may be, as Mr. Lacy indicated, "tragically impossible," without additional reserves. But unless the library makes the commitment, here and now, then those inside will never know who has played truant before their guarded steps.

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the way it is

In the Teeth of Prevailing Influences

WALTER TELLER

A friend was complaining about a tributary, the liquids which ooze and leak from his car.

"Maybe you got a lemon," I say.

"Lemon, no," he says. "This car is more like a watermelon. You should see the juice that runs out of it."

Mainstream. The mainstream, apparently, is rising. Certainly there is a flood of talk about it. But if many are speaking about the mainstream, few are attempting to say what it is. The words, sounding noble and fine and nostalgic, seem to refer to past and present surroundings. They don't, however, mean very much until one accounts for one's feelings about the surroundings; that is, until one measures the depth of the water.

When you come to the steady flow of beautiful lingo, of loneliness and of total noninvolvement, then you are in the mainstream. The mainstream carries the current of credit, installment-buying, mortgage and personal loan. And insurance. Home-owning is mainstream. Most homeowners are in it up to the chin. Commuting, consuming, collecting; colorslides, cookouts—beer cans beside the byways—and shopping centers—all of them ride the mainstream.

Mindlessness seems to swell the mainstream, or could it be vice versa?

There is also a mainstream of shibboleths of democracy—such as this phrase, the mainstream. And the shibboleths of that which passes for culture. You may, for example, order from the Thoreau Society a reproduction of an "1845 Thoreau Cabin." No need to borrow an ax the way Henry did—old Ellery Channing's, or was it Bronson Alcott's? The hut comes "completely installed and surprisingly inexpensive." And maybe with green stamps.

Where money is substituted for knowledge and taste, and where it is reckoned of greater value than either, where the overriding motivation is money, where the logical question is who selected this dreck and the logical answer is, I did, I submitted to it—this is the basin, the drainage area, the watershed of the mainstream.

Branches. Two moderate-size streams in upstate New York, one the West or Mohawk Branch, the other the East Branch, join at a place called Hancock and their confluence forms the mainstream of the Delaware River. The river flows south through the well-known and worn Water Gap. Not far below Easton, however, it swerves to the east, then continues southeast some forty miles until at Falls of Delaware it abruptly turns south again. By this maneuver the mainstream defines both the northeast and southeast boundaries of a trapezium-shaped land: Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

Midway along this stretch of river and also astride it, like Buda and Pest on the Danube, stand the twin settlements, New Hope and Lambertville, one on the Pennsylvania, the other on the New Jersey shore.

✪ WALTER TELLER's latest book, *Area Code 215: A Private Line in Bucks County* was published last year. "In the Teeth of Prevailing Influences" is the third installment of THE WAY IT IS.

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The west shore is paralleled, more or less, by the Delaware Division of the Pennsylvania Canal, the east by the feeder of the Delaware and Raritan Canal. On both sides the mainstream of barges, of mule-drawn traffic, has long since been hauled away.

Only a full generation ago, in the 1930's, the mainstream of the Depression swept into and rolled through Lambertville and the town has scarcely been seaworthy since. New Hope, in those days a side channel and even backwater place, escaped the full force of the freshet. Today, however, New Hope is breasting the tourist traffic and inevitably a new breed of boatman arises.

Time and the river have eroded the nineteenth-century wing dams built below New Hope and Lambertville. They no longer are able to hold back the water and thus form a lake between the twin towns, and for some distance upriver. This situation created a problem for Captain George Silvia and the vessel he recently built and launched at New Hope, the "Agnes Talford," a stern-wheeler of ninety tourist displacement.

Not long ago Captain Silvia told a local reporter he could have been cruising every night, right through the season. "To give you an idea," he said—according to the New Hope paper—"I had to cancel twenty-six parties when I decided there wasn't water enough . . . Friday a week ago we ran onto two rocks. . . ."

Either the water got too low or else the captain was driving a boat too big. In any case he presently sold the "Agnes Talford," loaded her onto a flatbed trailer and sent her to take in a cargo of tourists elsewhere. And thereby he salvaged the full investment in time and mistakes and money. This is where luck and the moral come in and I think they deserve pointing out. All life, when you stop to think about it, is a salvage operation in the teeth of prevailing influences.

Pools. Many a filtered and chlorinated pool, any size, any shape, residential, commercial, lies blue-sparkling in the stream. At the New Hope Inn I run onto one of the foremost talents who puts them there. Some artists know just how to lay the paint on the brush. This one does it with sand and cement, gravel and stone and water.

"One of my salesmen," he says, "made forty-four thousand last year. The guy sold a million dollars worth of pools and he's never even seen one built. How about that? He couldn't tell you what concrete is but he's just what a salesman ought to be."

"Which is to say?"

"Thirty-eight, but gray around the temples, and very sincere. Dresses well but not sharp. Incidentally, he's in debt to the company. The forty-four G's he makes don't quite cover his expenses, the Thunderbirds, and the diamonds his wife wears. They're so big she can't get her gloves on."

I try to imagine one million dollars worth of pools and the very ground and foundation I stand on begin to feel spongy. You may call it pools but what one is really selling is landscape, values, a way of life.

Log of the Molly-Polly-Chunker. Walking the towpath of the Delaware Division of the Pennsylvania Canal, now a state park, you feel and can't help feeling how it commemorates and illustrates history, yet very little of all this has thus far got onto the plaques and markers, or ever will. History matters to whom it matters. Men who care about history live different lives from those who do not. The ways of their minds are different. They surface through a different kind of unorganized material on waking up in the morning.

Few, at this stage, remember canalling and its unique form of leverage. My barber does, however. On a certain Tuesday—Tuesdays he cuts hair by appointment only—he spoke of the hundred ton loads of coal the wooden canalboats carried from Mauch Chunk, in the coal region, to Philadelphia, or New York. He said that when one of the slow moving craft neared the south end of New Hope and announced its approach to the lock tender by a blast from a long tin horn, children came run-

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ning out of their homes on the berm bank to jeer at the crew and make faces. A canalboat's crew comprised a man and two boys, sometimes a man and wife. None were likely to be shrinking violets. They would reach for the handiest pieces of cargo and send them flying. By this procedure several families laid in their winter's supply of coal.

Canalling was a seasonal trade. When winter came, canalmen returned to their homes. Mules, too, would go into winter retirement, boarded by nearby farmers who received their pay in manure. Mule manure was considered to have especially sovereign properties. My barber recalled that one wintry day when he was a boy he visited one of these farmers who, as it happened, was also one of the township supervisors. Then, as now, the township was heavily Republican. The farmer told him that down in his barn twelve Democrats were enjoying their dinner. Mystified, the boy went to the barn door, opened it a crack, peeped in, saw twelve mules munching and chomping. True, the twelve were no more than half Democrat, but as history is written and read this is indeed a minor inaccuracy.

The Delaware Division opened in 1834 and for the next twenty years boats ran all night and all day. The first boats employed were the old river craft such as the Durham boats which ferried Washington and his men. Riverboats, however, did not meet the new requirements and so the canalboat came into being. Designed for carrying coarse freights, the typical canalboat was eighty-seven and a half feet long overall, had a beam of ten and a half feet and a depth of seven feet at midship. And since most of them loaded at Mauch Chunk, they were known to the world as Chunkers.

A pity that among generations of Chunker skippers none, so far as I know, kept a log. Not only was canalling in its time a unique form of leverage on distance and weight—it must have allowed for considerable personal leverage as well. Like all forms of transportation it developed a language of its own, in this case rich if not salty. Some students of the American tongue believe that canallers were singularly accomplished cussers. Lock tenders, usually appointed for life, might have provided the documentary evidence but apparently no lock tender's record exists either.

In the circumstances one falls back on *The Log of the Molly-Polly-Chunker,* privately printed in New York in 1887. This little volume, forty pages, is not written in the vernacular but rather in the genteel tradition, yet like all logs and journals has authority. No author's name appears on cover or title page. Inside, however, one learns it was written by Henry Holt.

Henry Holt, publisher and author, was born into a comfortable Baltimore family in 1840. After attending private schools he entered Yale with the class of 1861. At Yale he rebelled against the administration and the secret societies but still managed to graduate with the class of 1862. Soon thereafter he began his career by buying an interest in a firm that published Civil War documents. He went on—and into personal publishing, one might say, for he believed that publishing was a profession, not simply a business. Before he died at age eighty-six, in New York, he made the name of Henry Holt & Company one of the most respected in the field.

The Log of the Molly-Polly-Chunker, which antedates Holt's novels and other books, tells of a trip made by Chunker, in June 1886, from Bristol, twenty miles northeast of Philadelphia, where the Delaware Division enters the Delaware River, up the canal to Mauch Chunk. It was a modified Chunker, however, "roofed over with a promenade deck furnished with black-and-yellow canvas curtains," and fitted out with, in the author's words, a saloon, kitchen, dining room and three sleeping rooms. There was also a darkroom, for all hands apparently were picture-snapping enthusiasts. Two draft animals Holt refers to as donkeys hauled it. Their names were Molly and Polly.

Twelve men and women of various ages made up the party. Holt gave to each a

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mock title. One he dubbed Double-Acting Photographer and Lord of the East Wind. He himself was The Scribe. The party was not without purpose: "The cultivation of the Beautiful and Moral, and the Extension of Human Knowledge." Also photography, as already hinted. And further, and "under proper restrictions and supervision of the Chaperons . . . having a good time." Beverages equal to the purposes were provided: champagne, claret and ginger ale.

On 17 June 1886, after a day's run of fifteen miles, The Molly-Polly tied up in New Hope. Next day The Scribe, who was forty-six and a widower, wrote, "New Hope smelt so badly . . . that experience in foreign towns led us to expect to find it very picturesque. The photographers started out bright and early and were disappointed while The Scribe and his sister walked across the long bridge to Lambertville for letters." The long bridge would be the covered one that spanned the Delaware until carried away in the flood of 1903.

At Lumberville, seven miles above New Hope, The Scribe made a further entry. "The canal boats began to be more frequent along here than below, and so, naturally, did the remarks of their occupants on our unprecedented appearance.

"One man, when our curtains were closed down, asked: 'Are there any animals in there?' He took us for a circus. . . .

"Another, seeing us at table, ejaculated: 'Boarders!'

"A third, passing when the sleeping rooms were being aired, ejaculated in surprise: 'Beds!' and, as he passed on, 'More beds!' "

Among those who signed on was Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933), painter, stained-glass maker and inventor of Favrile glass. Called Honorable Artist of the Expedition, he was the son of the Fifth Avenue jeweler and vice president of the company. Later in life he established the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation for art students. In the summer of 1886 he was, like Holt, a young widower.

Also on board was one whom Holt lists as Miss Knox. Her name was Louise Wakeman Knox. The Scribe called her The Charge for she was the charge of the chaperons.

"Monday, June 28, 1886. The Charge appeared in the morning, in a fresh, light dress, in which she had taken refuge from the Artist, who had been continually picking threads or straws off her blue flannel with a gentle, 'Excuse me.'

"It was a perfect photographing day. . . ."

Logs tend to be lean and this one is no exception. To one who knows the canal and towpath, however, the between-the-lines is not hard to imagine. While Molly and Polly, on a cloudless June day, stand lazing under the sycamore trees, batting their ears, Miss Knox, in her fresh light dress, evades the chaperons, all three of them. Camera in hand, she is up and away, far along the towpath, rounding a wide-sweeping bend, and Louis, taking his camera, is going in search, while The Scribe, smoking first-rate cigars, is scribing and the rest of the crew, and the butler, and the Officier de Bouche (as Holt called him) are below, developing plates in the darkroom. Miss Knox slows down, Louis soon overtakes her. Perhaps for a moment they put down their confounded cameras, and in the lee of blossoming rhododendron. . . . .

No need to pursue the conjecture. The Scribe did his work well. So did the Royal High Chaperon and the First Honorable and Second Honorable Assistants. Five months after the voyage ended Louis and Miss Knox were married, presumably to live happily ever after, that is, till she died in 1904, survived by Louis and their three daughters.

John Fitch. There's all manner of luck in the mainstream of history, and in whether or not historians find you. In 1790, almost one hundred years before Henry Holt and his friends set sail from Bristol in the wake of Molly and Polly, a steamboat put into that port. It had been built by John Fitch. Robert Fulton has been credited with inventing the steamboat—which he did not. The inventor in fact was John Fitch.

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John Fitch, fifth child of Joseph and Sarah Shaler Fitch, was born on his father's farm near Windsor, Connecticut, 21 January 1743. He came from a Yankee family, his forebears having emigrated from England early in the seventeenth century. His schooldays were few. He was put to work at age ten.

Young John was not strong, it is said. In any case he loathed farming. Neither his father nor older brother felt he carried his share of the farm work, a feeling perhaps exacerbated by his love of reading. He read every book he could get his hands on.

When he came of age, John Fitch borrowed money and with it set up a brass-working shop in East Windsor. Three years later, in 1767, he married a local girl, Lucy Roberts. The marriage did not pan out, however. Neither did an investment he made at this time in potash manufacturing. Early in 1769, John Fitch left his wife who, as it later appeared, was pregnant, his son Shaler, his home and native state.

By accident or design he headed south, landed in Trenton, and there resumed working in brass. Presently, however, the British came and closed down his shop. Fitch then enlisted in the Continental Army.

The war over, and Fitch having profited by it selling beer and tobacco, he tried another investment, this time in land warrants. He became a surveyor. In 1780 he recorded in his own name sixteen hundred acres in Kentucky. Two years later, while surveying along the Ohio, he was captured by Indians. When at length released, instead of returning to Trenton, he settled west of the Delaware River, that is, in Bucks County.

In Bucks County in 1785, in Warminster Township, well back from the water, John Fitch, forty-two years old, decided to invent a steamboat. There are the usual historiographical yarns telling how he came by the idea but of course no one really knows and it doesn't much matter. Fitch drew the design but where was the money to come from? With him money had been and ever would be a problem. The Continental Congress refused a subsidy. Five state legislatures, however, gave him exclusive rights for fourteen years to build and operate steamboats on their waters. Armed with these rights, and after successfully testing a model on a Warminster Township pond—the pond has evaporated and only a Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission marker remains—Fitch prevailed on a group of Philadelphians to finance construction of a forty-five-foot boat.

Came 22 August 1787. On the Delaware River at Philadelphia, in the presence of members of the Constitutional Convention then in session, John Fitch launched and operated the world's first steamboat. Powered by a steam engine he built with the help of a watchmaker, Henry Voight, the boat moved ahead, driven by paddles, six to a side, connected to the piston rod. It must have resembled an Indian war canoe minus the Indians. The following year Fitch built a sixty-foot job, this one propelled by a steam driven paddle wheel. Although it once carried thirty passengers between Philadelphia and Burlington, New Jersey, the public did not support it. Nothing daunted, Fitch built a third and still larger boat. Put into service in 1790, it maintained a regular schedule between Philadelphia, Burlington, Bristol, Bordentown and Trenton. The vessel won patents from the United States and French governments but not enough patronage to make it pay. It is hard to say why the public hesitated to go on board. It may have been only the people's well-known and possibly innate conservatism.

Nevertheless Fitch got his backers to finance a still larger boat. Very fittingly named "Perseverance," the new boat was about to be launched when a freak storm wrecked it. The storm also blew all financial aid away. Desperate now, Fitch sailed for France but found no help there. Unable to pay for a passage home, he had to work his way as a sailor. When he landed in Boston he was not only destitute but sick. A brother-in-law took him back to East Windsor where Fitch remained two years but without seeing wife or children.

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About 1796 John Fitch decided to return to Kentucky to take up the land he had surveyed some fifteen years earlier. First, however, he would go to New York and try once again to get his invention financed. He still owned his steamboat rights in five states. In those days a pond existed near Broadway and City Hall. On Collect Pond, as it was called, Fitch demonstrated his steamboat again, this time by means of a small yawl he converted into a screwdriven steamer. Once again the test was successful but it failed to raise the necessary capital.

A final disappointment awaited the inventor. When John Fitch arrived in Kentucky he found his land claims being contested. Since he had no money he could not defend them. Not long after, on 2 July 1798, he died in Bardstown, age fifty-five. He had missed altogether the main current of fortune while spinning into an eddy of fame.

The mainstream, apparently, is rising, flowing smooth and murmuring, but the man who is in it cannot tell what it is; the participant seldom knows what is happening, whether the mainstream is turning the wheel or whether the real work is done in the creeks and the branches.

En Bateau

JOSEPH SNELLER

Decks awash. The keel is fouled with days,
The silent rooks hang on the rim of the world.
It is not magic that in the stillness
The horizon of what is to be remembered
Reveals itself behind the established mountains
And in its transcendence compels the mind
To fare in devotion through the bitterness of place
To the possible haven. Bells in the fog,
The distant chorus of twilight beyond the masts
Calls, while below the sprit and laced in gold
The comb and carriage of the blessed lady
Yet confirm the drunken sailor in his dreams.

✪ JOSEPH SNELLER writes that he is "currently at work collecting a book of poetry, translating J. Prevert and writing a study of the film directors and novelists of the 'Nouvelle Vague.'"

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Ironies and Intimations

Jevons and the Establishment

CLOVIS

William Stanley Jevons, the nineteenth-century English economist, once complained of having to teach old economic theories in which he did not himself believe simply in order to get his students through their examinations.

Jevons' difficulty must have originated with himself; for certainly the majority of his colleagues, working in like circumstances, did not experience it. His maladjustment, I surmise, had its cause in the existence of a thinking Jevons who was, inevitably, at odds with the teaching Jevons. We call this "split personality." In today's England the state makes psychiatric care available for such cases.

Before we undertake the examination of this unfortunate case, there are two points that we should note. First, it was the teaching Jevons, not the thinking Jevons, who earned a living. Second, it was the teaching Jevons who upheld the foundations of society by getting the new generation through its examinations. The thinking Jevons, to the extent that he impeded the performance of this work, was subversive.

The case of Jevons is not unique in history. In fact, we may assume that the gulf between the individual mind that does its own thinking and the common mind that rules society first opened up at the moment when Adam took his first bite out of the fruit of knowledge. It has since been reconfirmed and renewed every time a Jevons has taken another bite.

Now, no one can stop a teacher from thinking for himself; no one can prevent him from reenacting Original Sin. But the system within which he teaches must necessarily require him, still, to teach the common mind rather than his own. An educational system has got to be a system of authority. If every teacher thought for himself, and taught what he thought, society would break down in anarchy. Let us be clear on this point: it is not the business of a Jevons to teach the thought of Jevons. If we allowed that sort of thing, then some students would learn Jevons and some would learn Bevons and some would learn Devons, and so on. Examinations could not be set and even the common language would break down in chaos. The business of Jevons, I conclude, was to teach the false and outdated economic theories of John Stuart Mill, which the academic establishment still accepted, and not to go questioning them. If his own theories were to be taught at all, then the teaching of them would have to wait until future generations when they, too, had become orthodox and out-of-date.

I could say that the problem is one of orthodoxy against heterodoxy, but I won't. Today, when we who represent the academic establishment suspect a teacher of being unorthodox, we avoid using that term. We use a synonym: we say that he is "unsound." He is not a "sound" scholar, we murmur to each other in those moments of confidence that bind the members of our profession together. It is possible that the head of the college where Jevons taught was approached, on occasion, by solidly established men who took him aside to say: "We think we must tell you that we do not consider Jevons quite one of us, you know —not quite a sound man." They did not allow themselves to say that he was "unorthodox."

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My remarks so far do not altogether apply, however, above the level of undergraduate teaching. We at the graduate level stand at the frontiers of thought, facing forward. Each of us is very busy working at a book. When the book comes out, then John Maynard Keynes or John Kenneth Galbraith or whoever it is (I am not good at names) will have to take his place beside John Stuart Mill as one whose thought was also considered, at one time, worth teaching.

Perhaps I should introduce myself at this point. My field is not political economy but "international politics," which I teach only to graduate students. Political economy is old stuff, but international politics stands on the frontier of progress. No one ever heard of it until my colleague, Hans Morgenthau, coined the term a few years ago. Because, in effect, I teach tomorrow's subject today, I have to do my teaching out of my own head. There is no John Stuart Mill whose tablets are handed down to me as they were to old Jevons. (I am writing a book to fill this gap, so that no one after my time will again find himself in the position I have found myself in of having to use his own head.)

You might think that, with the discipline of international politics so new-and-all, I have everything my own way; but it's not so. Every time I try to reach for my subject to take a look at it, preparatory to teaching it, some social scientist grabs my arm and asks for my credentials. "What courses have you had in methodology?" I am asked. Or: "Under whom did you study decision-making?" Or: "Do you accept Slopkin's distinction between the state-as-actor and the government-as-actor?"

In the beginning I was terribly upset and confused by this. (I still blush to remember how, the first time someone caught my arm and fired his question, I replied that I was sorry but I didn't understand French.) Now, however, everything is clear to me. It is a case of what I believe are called "in-groups" and "out-groups." If you are going to teach a subject, then you have to qualify as a member of the "in-group" to which the teaching of that subject belongs. This involves familiarity with a certain jargon, with particular code words and their use in communication among insiders. (In some cases, I believe, there is a secret handshake as well.) The "in-group," having a heavy responsibility, has to go in for this kind of thing in order to protect itself in the discharge of that responsibility. (The teaching of the subject must on no account be allowed to fall into the hands of outsiders.) Consequently, when a man does not know the code words, the whisper quickly goes around that he is not, you know, a sound man.

Although everything is all right today, I did have some hard times when I first tried to teach international politics. I was like a man who finds, quite unexpectedly, that he has just been elected pope. Every time he starts to do something that seems to him perfectly normal an alarmed cardinal or papal secretary flies up to tell him that there are forms and ceremonies that must accompany the doing. If he simply wants to walk out of the Vatican to take the air, he learns that he must be wearing certain vestments and holding his hands above him in benediction or something. If he wants to smoke, he has to get off the balcony of St. Peter's first.

That's the way it was with me in the beginning. But I'm all right now. I'm an authority on this business now. So, if you're trying to break into it, as I once was, I can give you a few pointers.

We must recognize, I think, that there was a certain arrogance on the part of Jevons in setting himself up against the academic establishment, in presuming to do his own thinking. I have learned a thing or two since I myself began, and I could have given Jevons some advice that would have saved him a lot of grief. (Note, for instance, that I have not signed my own name to this article.)

What advice?

Let us imagine the case of a man who has to lecture on the philosophy of Hegel. In principle, he can do either one of two things. He can go to standard texts to find out what everyone says Hegel's philosophy

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was, and he can proceed to teach that. Or he can (in principle) read the works of Hegel to find out at first hand what his philosophy really was. If he is efficient in his profession, the first alternative should not take up more than an evening. The second alternative, if it were possible at all, would probably take five years. (I once spent an entire day deciphering one sentence from the *Phenomenology of Mind* and I don't myself think one could improve on that rate.)

Supposing, however, that the second alternative was possible, it would involve some exceedingly troublesome consequences. The man who adopted it would discover that Hegel's philosophy was not what everyone for generations had been saying it was. He would find that it was, in fact, quite different from what was taught in the academic establishment as Hegel's philosophy. Then, if that was what he taught, he would quickly find the word going around that he was not a sound man.

I know all this from personal observation and experience, of which I here offer two samples.

Many years ago, as a student still in my teens, I had what was certainly the most passionate if not the most enduring love affair of my career. It was with Oswald Spengler. I read the two fat volumes of *The Decline of the West* intensively and minutely, working at them night after night for many months with a determination I would no longer be capable of manifesting today. Night after night I went to bed with Spengler. I got so that I really did know his mind as well as one can ever know another man's mind by taking his books to bed.

Ever since then, in learned journals and learned books, I have come across discussions of Spengler's theories in terms that implied both the author's and the reader's total familiarity ("of course") with every word he wrote. Because I really have read Spengler, it is a matter of my private knowledge that the author is always bluffing. He is reporting, as what Spengler said, what everyone says he said, which is not what he said. He is safe in doing this because it is almost a sure thing that none of his readers will have ever read a word of Spengler themselves.

I have, myself, written books that are much easier to read than those of Hegel or Spengler, but the incentive to read them appears to have been neither great nor widespread. They have, however, provided occasion for learned accounts of what I think, accounts that are transparently phony only to me (who am the world's greatest authority on what I think). In one such account that I have at hand, I can tell just which ten pages the learned commentator read in the book of mine that he was discussing. Under the guise of having made a study of me (and this, in itself, is so flattering that I readily forgive him everything), he pats me on the head but points out that my philosophy really will not do.

Now my dear Jevons (I would tell him), let's be practical. We live in a society that depends on the achievement of consensus more than on the achievement of truth. How do you think any of our big governments would work, today, if the consensuses that were developed inside them were rejected simply because they were wrong? How would our mass societies hold together if each person thought for himself instead of accepting what everyone accepted? What would happen to the establishment, whether the governing or the academic establishment? How do you suppose we could educate the new generation in political economy, my dear Jevons, if we gave top priority to the truth of what we taught? Come off it, man! Join the establishment and enjoy a long life of peace and (if not honor) honors.

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REAPPRAISALS

The Uses of Madness: William Cowper's *Memoir*

JOHN N. MORRIS

William Cowper's *Memoir*, composed in 1766 although not published until 1816, is one of the earliest works by a man regarded as one of the most eminent poets of his time. Biographers refer to it, of course; and so do critics, who find in Cowper's private distress as it is recorded there the source of certain of his poems. Seldom, however, does anyone treat the *Memoir* as a work in its own right, as a literary production with its own peculiar virtue, its own claim on our attention.

But such a claim it has. For one thing, it is the first piece of introspective autobiography by an English literary person. Neither John Bunyan, whose *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* Cowper's work in some respects resembles, nor George Fox, whose *Journal* inspired a host of humble imitations, was a man of letters first of all. Cowper was; and his *Memoir* expresses (in a good sense of the term) a literary sensibility.

This distinction between Bunyan and Fox on the one hand and Cowper on the other may seem unnecessarily fine. But it is not. It simply calls attention to the fact that explicit autobiographical exploitation of the inner life is something to which English minds with access to the official culture of their times came late. To private experience, in particular the experience of psychological distress, John Stuart Mill was to say that his age owed "much both of its cheerful and its mournful wisdom." Mill's notion many modern readers are willing to ratify. My point here is that William Cowper was the first of what was to become the numerous class of intellectuals who, having recognized that source of wisdom, give an account of the discovery.

The private experience in which Cowper deals is extreme experience—the experience of religious conversion, but conversion preceded and in fact determined by madness. More explicitly than a Bunyan or a Fox he recognizes his mental crisis for what it was, a decline into absolute insanity. And by both recognizing it and (in a complicated way) approving it, Cowper helps to begin the modern project of making available to serious attention abnormal states of mind, a project that for better or worse has vastly enlarged the scope of our moral and imaginative concerns.

One virtue of Cowper's book is its sharpness of focus. He leaves out of account nearly everything that does not bear directly on the main matter of his story, his passage through madness and despair to faith and relative (and temporary) serenity. The work is "a history of my heart, so far as religion has been its object," he says in the first paragraph, and to the formal principle there enunciated he is almost perfectly loyal. He tells us very little of his childhood—we wish he told us more, for we suspect it to be more relevant than he imagined—but what he does record seems much to the point. One characteristic of Cowper implicated in his collapse was his extreme shyness, a dauntedness of spirit that prevented his appearing before any board of examiners or any body that could be conceived of as a court of judg-

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ment. An early expression of this timidity occurred when he was a boy at school. There he became the favorite victim of a bully a few years older than he. So strongly did this boy's cruelty impress "dread of his figure" upon Cowper's mind "that I well remember being afraid to lift up my eyes upon him higher than his knees." It may be that Cowper's later terror in the face of authority, a terror expressed in his frenzy at the prospect of examination before the House of Lords and in his recurrent conviction that he was mysteriously, irretrievably damned, had something to do with this early acquaintance with cruel and whimsical power. And the reader notices the economy and force with which Cowper renders his old fear: "I knew him by his shoe-buckles better than any other part of his dress," he writes, a sentence that enacts the emotion rather than merely giving it a name.

Cowper records only a few more of his boyhood experiences. As a student at Westminster School the most valuable instruction he received—most valuable because it was religious—occurred when, crossing a churchyard one night, he was attracted by a glimmering light. "Just as I arrived at the spot a grave-digger who was at work by the light of his lanthorn threw up a skull which struck me upon the leg." This reminder of mortality alarmed his conscience for a time, until "surveying my activity and . . . observing the evenness of my pulse, I began to entertain with no small complacency a notion that perhaps I might never die!" The delusion did not last long. But this movement of Cowper's mind from one extreme to another anticipated in childhood the fluctuation of mood that was to plague him the rest of his life.

In 1749 Cowper, not quite eighteen, left Westminster, and early the next year he began the study of law. Three years later he took up residence in the Middle Temple. Now, he says, "I became in a manner complete master of myself"—only to be plunged into the first of his periods of dejection. "Day and night I was upon the rack, lying down in horror and rising up in despair." According to one trustworthy biographer, this period seems not to have been so absolutely gloomy as Cowper remembered it. But there was good reason for the darkness of Cowper's recollection of this time. It was to conclude in what in his later madness he held to be his first commission of the unforgivable sin against the Holy Ghost.

For about a year Cowper struggled with his melancholy. His pleasure in the classics disappeared as his distress deepened. The "uncouth" poems of Herbert were the only works in which he could find pleasure and comfort. At last, urged by those anxious for him, he accompanied some friends to Southampton on a visit lasting several months. One morning early in their stay the companions walked out to Freemantle, a place a mile or so from town:

> the morning was clear and calm; the sun shone bright upon the sea; and the country on the borders of it was the most beautiful I had ever seen. We sat down upon an eminence at the end of the arm of the sea which runs between Southampton and the New Forest. Here it was that on a sudden, as if another sun had been kindled that instant in the heavens on purpose to dispel sorrow and vexation of spirit, I felt the weight of all my misery taken off; my heart became light and joyful in a moment; I could have wept with transport had I been alone.

At the time Satan prompted him to believe he owed his "deliverance to nothing but a change of scene and the amusing varieties of the place." He was to make a still worse mistake when in 1763, in the depths of a worse despair, he recalled and condemned this "neglect to improve the mercies of God at Southampton" as constituting the unforgivable sin.

> No favourable construction of my conduct in that instance, no argument of my brother's who was now with me, nothing he could suggest in extenuation of my offences could gain a moment's admission. Satan furnished me so readily with weapons against myself that neither scripture nor reason could undeceive me.

At the moment of writing Cowper was no longer deceived. It was clear to his restored mind that on that morning near South-

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ampton "nothing less than the Almighty fiat could have filled me with such inexpressible delight"; he had viewed that day a "flash" of God's "life-giving countenance." And although he had sinned in misconstruing this manifestation, he had not sinned unforgivably. For the time being he understood that despair is itself a sin of the worst sort. Cowper's book is in one of its aspects the account of his struggle to attain to that hopeful, sane and profound judgment.

In the years just after his healing visit to Southampton Cowper lived in London the life of a young man about town. His *Memoir*, keeping always to its announced theme, says little of this period. By 1760 his patrimony was nearly spent. In 1763, providentially as it then seemed, a kinsman, a Major William Cowper, offered him the Clerkship of the Journals of the House of Lords. This offer he accepted, only to learn that he had "to expect an examination at the bar of the House touching my sufficiency for the post." The Lords were disturbed (with some reason, it seems) at the Cowpers' management of their right of appointment to this and other clerkships and were investigating the matter; to demand that young Cowper appear before them was one step they took. "A thunderbolt would have been as welcome to me as this intelligence," Cowper writes. "They whose spirits are formed like mine to whom a public examination of themselves on any occasion is mortal poison may have some idea of the horrors of my situation; others can have none."

Now Cowper's severest trials began. To prepare for the examination he had every day to visit the Clerk's office to study the manner of doing business there. But to no purpose. "Many months passed over me thus employed—constant in the use of means, despairing as to the issue." Again he tried a change of scene, the expedient that had served so well on that earlier occasion. At Margate this time, he recovered his spirits, although at first not completely. Each morning he awoke to the painful consciousness that the time of judgment was a day nearer. In these moments he felt "like a man borne away by a rapid torrent into a stormy sea whence he sees no possibility of returning and where he knows he cannot subsist." But the pleasures of the day allayed his distress, and eventually he "acquired such a facility of turning away my thoughts from the ensuing crisis that for weeks together" he managed not to think of it at all.

Reality was not permanently to be banished. In October he returned to London, and now his terror was once more as fresh and total as at first. "I saw plainly that God alone could deliver me," he writes, "but was firmly persuaded that he would not and therefore omitted to ask it." Here Cowper formulates his plight without recourse to the theological phrases—"the unforgiveable sin," "the sin against the Holy Ghost"—he will soon employ. The naked plainness of this statement expresses perhaps more vividly than those later ones, in which language attempts to absorb Cowper's misery into some theory, the precise nature of the straits in which he finds himself: he is a man totally dependent on and totally hopeless of God's mercy.

In this state of mind he "began to look upon madness as the only chance remaining." All along he had persevered partly out of unwillingness to embarrass his patron, and a mental collapse would provide that person as well as Cowper himself a legitimate reason for withdrawing. Now his main fear was that he would not go mad soon enough; and this fear suggested to him that he take his own life. The step from one to the other seemed easy. "Being reconciled to the apprehension of madness, I began to be reconciled to the apprehension of death." So extreme was his misery at the moment, that the pains of hell—if there were such a place—seemed "more supportable."

Still he vacillated. One morning in November, as he sat breakfasting in a coffeehouse, his eye fell upon a letter in a newspaper. The more attentively he read the letter the more it "appeared demonstratively true that it was a libel or satire" upon him.

The author appeared to be acquainted with my purpose of self-destruction and to have written that letter on purpose to secure and hasten the

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execution of it. . . . I said within myself, "Your cruelty shall be gratified; you shall have your revenge," and flinging down the paper in a fit of strong passion I rushed hastily out of the room, directing my way towards the fields where I intended to find some house to die in, or, if not, determined to poison myself in a ditch when I should meet with one sufficiently retired.

What followed was even more remarkable. Cowper's account of the next forty-eight hours of his life demonstrates with unexampled clarity the strength some healthy and resilient portion of a neurotic self may be able to oppose to the destructive intentions of the conscious will. These pages in Cowper's memoir support Freud's notion, as stated in *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, that faulty and "chance actions" may be referred to "incompletely suppressed psychic material, which, although pushed away by consciousness, has nevertheless not been robbed of all capacity for expressing itself." In Cowper it was not dark things that were repressed but the wish in part of the self to remain alive.

It was forty-eight hours of warfare. Not long before, Cowper had bought a half ounce of laudanum, and it was with this that he proposed to poison himself. He had walked no more than a mile from the coffeehouse when it suddenly occurred to him that all he need do was escape immediately to France, where, becoming a Catholic, he might enter a monastery. Instantly he hurried home and began to pack. Now, just as suddenly, "self-murder was recommended to me once more in all its advantages." He took a coach to Tower Wharf, where he planned to drown himself, and there he found the tide out and, as was to be expected, a watchman on duty "as if on purpose to prevent me." The purpose, of course, was not the watchman's but Cowper's. Safe in the coach once more (the same one he had come in; apparently he had ordered it to wait), he thought of the laudanum again. Now he

determined to drink it off directly; but God had *otherwise ordained. A conflict that shook me* to pieces suddenly took place—not properly a trembling but a convulsive agitation which deprived me in a manner of the use of my limbs, and my mind was as much shaken as my body.

As he acutely remarks, he was "distracted between the desire of death and the dread of it"; even at the moment he "took notice of this circumstance with some surprise." Twenty times he attempted to drink, but he could not. He fared no better at home. Reaching for a basin into which he had poured the laudanum, he found that suddenly "the fingers of both hands were as closely contracted as if bound with a cord and became entirely useless." And now "the convincing Spirit" showed him the horror of what he had been about to do. Hastily he poured out the laudanum. "This impulse having served, the present purpose was withdrawn"; the instrument of death had vanished, and with it, for a moment once more, the desire to live.

Cowper spent the next day in bed in a state of "stupid insensibility," again determined to die but uncertain what manner of death to choose. That night he fell asleep for what he thought was to be the last time. "The next morning was to place me at the bar of the House, and I determined not to see it." At three he awoke, and, taking his penknife into bed with him, lay "with it for some hours directly pointed against my heart. Twice or thrice I placed it upright under my left breast, leaning all my weight against it." Again he had contrived to frustrate his own will: "the point was broken off and would not penetrate."

At seven he arose. No time was to be lost, as his sponsor would soon arrive to take him to the House. Having bolted the door—he thought—he tied a garter into a noose and attempted to hang himself, once from a bedpost and once from the tester, both of which he broke. Now, almost successfully, he tried again, this time looping the garter over the angle of the door. There he dangled until at last, not surprisingly (but just in time), the garter parted and Cowper, unconscious now, fell to the floor. Regaining his senses, he went "reeling and staggering" back to bed. In a moment, much to his surprise, he heard his laundress moving about in the next room. It was she he had intended to keep out by bolting

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the door—a no doubt habitual operation that on this particular occasion he had managed not to perform. The woman sent for help, and soon his patron appeared to pronounce the welcome words, "My dear Mr. Cowper, you terrify me; to be sure you cannot hold the office at this rate—where is the deputation?"

Cowper recognized as clearly as any modern reader the oddness of this chronicle.

> It would be strange should I omit to observe here how I was continually hurried away from such places as were most favourable to my design to others where it must be almost impossible to execute it—from the fields, where it was improbable that anything should happen to prevent me, to the Custom-house Quay, where every thing of that kind was to be expected; and this by a sudden impulse which lasted just long enough to call me back again to my chambers and was immediately withdrawn. Nothing ever appeared more feasible than the project of going to France till it had served its purpose, and then in an instant it appeared impracticable and absurd even to a degree of ridicule.

Cowper ascribes the frustration of his attempts to God, "who alone had the right to dispose of" his life. But Cowper's contradictory impulses and the series of "mistakes" he made are surely capable of the Freudian interpretation suggested earlier. Some part of him was determined not to let him destroy himself. The episodes Cowper recounts may be described as a kind of battle, in which two parts of himself struggled to achieve their opposite, deeply intended purposes.

But what if those purposes were really one? For one purpose the struggle did achieve—the avoidance of the public test before the House of Lords. Perhaps the battle was a fiction, a drama staged by Cowper to excuse him to the world and to himself from the examination he so dreaded. So much the cessation of hostilities at the moment the threat was withdrawn suggests: Cowper never meant to kill himself, but only to convince himself that he meant to do so. In this interpretation of the matter, those "faulty and chance actions" of the Freudian formulation are still seen to be at work—but in cooperation with their apparent enemy.

One may take still another view of the matter, a view including something of the first two. In suicide, according to Karl A. Menninger, the desire to kill oneself is by no means always to be identified with the desire to die. In part of his mind the suicide may simply wish to visit upon himself, at the behest of inexorable conscience, the ultimate punishment, a wish to which another part of his mind, as victim, may be most unwilling to accede. The victim need not do active battle, for although he does not wish to die, he may not desire very strongly to live. But he may evade his executioner as slyly as he can—as slyly as Cowper did. The interest of Menninger's notions is that they help us to understand why Cowper did what he did and why it should be an appearance before the House of Lords that occasioned so extreme a response. Further, they begin to explain the character of Cowper's later religious despair. For if, as Menninger maintains, the wish to kill oneself expresses "aggressive and punitive elements" in the psyche, elements in the service of iron conscience, then, in the persons of the Lords and of his God, reality may have seemed to Cowper to be providing unbearably painful *simulacra* of a grim tableau already poised within him: on the one hand hanging judge and executioner; on the other hand a reluctant, uncooperative accused. This work of supererogation on the part of reality may have startled that interior court into action, as if circumstance had confirmed its rights.

But action to what end? Perhaps, as in Menninger's view, to procure the real death of the accused self in expiation of some crime against conscience, a punishment the self regards not as justified execution but as self-murder (a term Cowper uses several times). On the other hand, it may be that Cowper's strange behavior was a strategy he devised to placate reality by taking upon himself (and contriving to thwart) the judicial office circumstance was about to assume. Less dangerously, as it may have seemed to him, he could perform what reality threatened, magically and as if by ritual satisfying and forestalling it.

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It is impossible to know which of these suppositions comes closest to the truth. But one fact all of them proclaim: what Cowper feared was judgment. He feared it, we may confidently infer, because he felt it would discover in him a guilt he dared not contemplate. The nature of that guilt is forever obscure, to us as it was to him. But we may be certain he felt it. Of this his notion that that letter in the newspaper was directed at him is evidence; it testifies to his fear of discovery—discovery of an intent to commit suicide in the first instance, but a discovery actuated by the unnamed writer's desire to revenge himself on Cowper for some unspecified wrong. And Cowper felt that he had been appointed to that clerkship in the House of Lords partly as the result of an immoral desire. When his kinsman first suggested he accept the post when the incumbent came to die, both men

> expressed an earnest wish for his death that I might be provided for. Thus did I covet what God had commanded me not to covet and involved myself in still deeper guilt by doing it in the spirit of a murderer. It pleased the Lord to give me my heart's desire and with it an immediate punishment for my crime.

To the unconscious, the desire is the moral equivalent of the act, and this wish of Cowper's, although insufficient to explain all that followed, surely contributed to his distress. When the post was in fact offered, Cowper felt almost as he uttered the words of acceptance "a dagger at my heart." The shyness that had made such a job seem so desirable was now worse than ever: "a finger raised against me was more than I could stand against." At the office where he went through the motions of preparing himself for the examination his feelings were "much like" those "of a man when he arrives at the place of execution."

In short, his notion that the letter in the newspaper was meant for him was only the most extreme and most nearly disastrous expression of his guilty self-consciousness. After his abortive attempt at suicide,

> I never went into the street but I thought the people stood and laughed at me and held me in contempt, and could hardly persuade myself but that the voice of conscience was loud enough for every one to hear it. They who knew me seemed to avoid me, and if they spoke to me seemed to do it in scorn. I bought a ballad of one who was singing it because I thought it was written on me.

The words of chance acquaintances had once seemed to urge suicide; now all sorts of things—from Archbishop Tillotson's sermons to the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher—taught despair. "Everything preached to me, and everything preached the curse of the law."

The curse of the law is a phrase expressing the judicial aspect of Christianity. Cowper's attempted suicide had served to prevent his appearance before the Lords. But now it called him before the Lord God. His terror was absolute, as we shall see. But at least his deed had provided a sin for his baffled guiltiness to fix upon. Here at last was an offense for which he could deserve to suffer. From the point of view of his psychic economy, it served a useful, if very painful, purpose, permitting him to evade the confrontation of whatever in his past had entailed his misery upon him. Now his guilt had an object—an object nearly unbearable to contemplate but, if these speculations are even approximately correct, preferable to the mysterious one that long had weighed so obscurely upon his mind.

But however useful his sin seemed to part of him, to Cowper's consciousness it was an immediate, relentless torture. Cowper skulked through the streets, dining in taverns, "where I went alone in the dark," and taking every care to hide from the accusing glance of his fellows. On these excursions, "I reeled and staggered like a drunken man; the eyes of man I could not bear; but when I thought that the eyes of God were upon me (which I felt assured of) it gave me the most intolerable anguish." Still, although he was "overwhelmed with despair," he had "not yet sunk into the bottom of the gulph." That "gulph," of course, was the conviction that at Southampton years before he had refused God's grace, thereby committing the sin against the Holy Ghost that excluded him absolutely from salvation. It scarcely needs to

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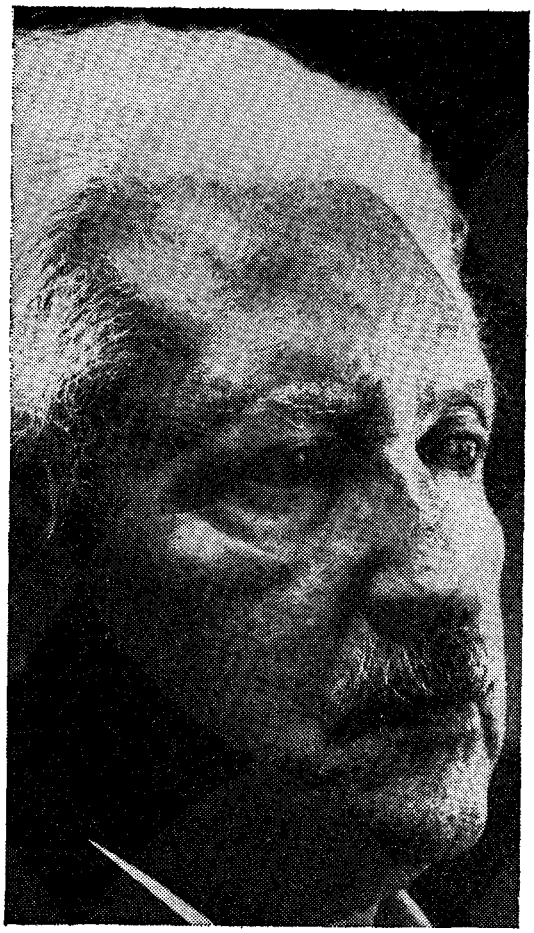

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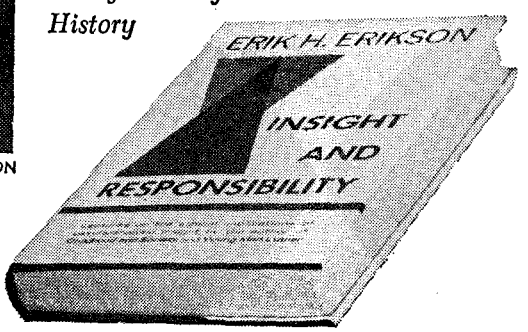

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be argued that this passage in his autobiography is deeply felt. But *how* deeply felt is suggested by the imagery, which anticipates the concluding lines of "The Castaway," a poem Cowper wrote more than thirty years later, in which he tells of a young sailor ("such a destin'd wretch as I") who is washed overboard and drowned.

> No voice divine the storm allay'd,
> No light propitious shone;
> When snatch'd from all effectual aid,
> We perish'd, each alone:
> But I beneath a rougher sea,
> And whelm'd in deeper gulphs than he.

Into these depths he was to be cast several times. The occasion recorded in his *Memoir* was only the first—a fact he could not know, of course, when he wrote it. But his recurrence in this late poem to the imagery of the early *Memoir* indicates that subsequent attacks revealed no greater horrors than did the first one.

In this state of mind Cowper could sleep very little—only an hour some nights. Dreaming was more terrible than full consciousness.

> One morning as I lay between sleeping and waking I seemed to myself to be walking in Westminster Abbey, waiting till prayers should begin; presently I thought I heard the minister's voice and hastened towards the choir; just as I was upon the point of entering, the iron gate under the organ was flung in my face with a jar that made the Abbey ring.

Cowper tells us that at the time of writing he knew the interpretation this dream clearly invited to be a wrong one. He had come to believe that despair was not a response to sin but sin itself. To submit to it was to condemn one's soul to death, to commit spiritual suicide. At least, it is as suicide that he seems to conceive of despair when he says in a passage already quoted, "Satan furnished me so readily with weapons against myself that neither scripture nor reason could undeceive me." But as he had thwarted and come to condemn his attempts at physical self-destruction, so at last he was empowered to resist its spiritual counterpart.

But not without the greatest difficulty. "Another time," he writes in a paragraph immediately following the description of his dream, "I seemed to pronounce to myself, 'Evil be thou my good.' I verily thought that I had adopted that hellish sentiment —it seemed to come so directly from my heart." This utterance is Satan's, and it appears in Book IV, line 110 of *Paradise Lost*, always one of Cowper's favorite poems. A little earlier Cowper had called the temptation to despair "the capital engine in all the artillery of Satan," clearly an allusion to Milton's Book VI. There he associates himself with Satan's enemies, the embattled loyal angels. But once his temptation has been accomplished, Cowper is Satan himself—and Satan in defiant mood. For more of Satan's speech than this concluding resolution seems relevant here. Satan has been reflecting on his sufferings.

> Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell;
> And in the lowest deep a lower deep
> Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide,
> To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heav'n.
> (ll. 75-78)

Thus Cowper, to whom "life appeared . . . now more eligible than death only because it was a barrier between me and everlasting burnings." And Cowper is with Satan in inquiring,

> is there no place
> Left for Repentance, none for Pardon left?
> (ll. 79-80)

The answer Satan gives himself we may believe to be Cowper's too.

> None left but by submission; and that word
> *Disdain* forbids me. . . . (ll. 81-82)

The pridefulness of these lines Cowper cannot admit to consciousness. But the phrase his heart supplied him, taken in its context, suggests that that quality of character was part of him.

> So farewell Hope, and with Hope farewell Fear,
> Farewell Remorse: all Good to me is lost;
> Evil be thou my Good; by thee at least
> Divided Empire with Heav'n's King I hold
> By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign
> (ll. 108-12)

Cowper's ultimate despair, it seems to me, expresses in part a desire to maintain at whatever cost the integrity of the self

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against the including grace that self construes as a threat to its identity. "Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heav'n," says Satan at another point, and so, for a time, does Cowper's rebelliously despairing soul. Such a self prefers the painful distinction of standing outside the fold as the one lost sheep to the comforts of inclusion among the anonymous ninety and nine.

Like Satan, Cowper could not repent of his sins, he could only be tortured by them. But Cowper lacked Satan's spiritedness. A dryness of the spirit had come upon him, that state of spiritual near-indifference, *accidia*, of which other introspective autobiographers speak. "I knew that many persons had spoken of shedding tears for sin," Cowper writes, "but when I asked myself whether the time would ever come when I should weep for mine, it seemed to me that a stone might sooner do it." The springs of feeling were inaccessible. But one day, under the ministrations of his cousin Martin Madan, an Evangelical clergyman, "those tears which I thought impossible burst forth freely." For a few hours he was easier in mind. But that night he awoke from a short sleep to find himself in agonies of both mind and body. Here was the most extreme crisis of his disease. The pains of death and hell alternated with a paralyzing numbness. "No convicted criminal ever feared death more or was more assured of dying," he says, making the comparison of himself to a guilty man that by now we have come to expect. At noon the next day, his brother providentially at hand, Cowper fell into a state that clearly demanded professional attention. He recalls those moments vividly.

> While I traversed the apartment in the most horrible dismay of soul, expecting every moment that the earth would open her mouth and swallow me, my conscience scaring me, the avenger of blood pursuing me, and the city of refuge out of reach and out of sight, a strange and horrible darkness fell upon me. If it were possible that a heavy blow could light on the brain without touching the skull, such was the sensation I felt. I clapped my hand to my forehead and cried aloud through the pain it gave me. At every stroke my thoughts and expressions became more wild and incoherent; all that remained clear was the sense of sin and the expectation of punishment.

Now Cowper was quickly placed in the charge of a Dr. Nathaniel Cotton, whose asylum in St. Albans had a good reputation which, by Cowper's account, it fully deserved. There he remained for eighteen months—from December 1763 until June 1765.

Of these the first eight were the worst. All that happened during those months "may be classed under two heads—conviction of sin and despair of mercy." Cowper is more particular in another paragraph.

> A sense of self-loathing and abhorrence ran through all my insanity. Conviction of sin and expectation of instant judgment never left me. . . . The accuser of the brethren was ever busy with me night and day, bringing to my recollection in dreams the commission of long-forgotten sins and charging upon my conscience things of an indifferent nature as atrocious crimes.

It is interesting to see in the last of these sentences his recollection and condemnation of his restless efforts to find in memory transgressions for which his present and anticipated sufferings might be said to answer. Once, as we have seen, his attempted suicide had been a sufficient object, but apparently it no longer served. Something in him seemed to hunger to find in the realities of the past occasions for his pain. Cowper came at last to recognize that this was wrong. Greediness of conscience he understood to be a mental and a spiritual disease. But it is worth noting that even this symptom of his madness was in a sense at the service of a crazy rationality. For what he sought to do was balance the equation: if he suffered, it must be because of sin; otherwise the world made no moral sense. Misery he might be able to support; but not banality.

When five of these first eight months had passed he found himself a little hardened to his condition. " 'Eat and drink for tomorrow thou shalt be in hell' was the maxim on which I proceeded. By this means I entered into conversation with the Doctor, laughed at his stories, and told him some of my own, to match them—still, however, carrying a sentence of ir-

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revocable doom in my heart." Now, slowly, he began to improve. Toward the end of the eighth month of his confinement the "cloud of horror" withdrew. "The Lord had enlarged my heart, and I ran in the way of his commandments." The transformation in his feelings is deliberately suggested by the substitution of "ran" for the "walked" of the passage he here alludes to. Dr. Cotton, naturally enough, feared that this sudden transition might "terminate in a fatal frenzy," for "tears were ready to flow if I did but speak of the gospel or mention the name of Jesus." But after nearly twelve months of probation, Cowper was pronounced cured; and now he retired to the village of Huntingdon, near Cambridge, where by November, 1765, he was settled as a boarder with the Unwin family who for many years were to love and care for him. At this point his *Memoir* ends.

Cowper stands with Bunyan and Fox in having found language suitable to his occasions. But it is language of a different sort from theirs. Cowper's imagery is not drawn from the dumb circumstances of humble life. As a result his book lacks some of the uncalculated and therefore even more moving pathos of Bunyan's and Fox's accounts, which find sermons in stones because there is nowhere else to look for them. But if Cowper loses something, he gains something too. His education and instinct enable him to draw more widely than these men upon experience not only of objects but of the ideas and formulations of others. His allusions to Milton, for example, are not merely decorative. His reading had become a part of him, and his imagination had recourse to it in proposing to his consciousness the precise nature of his feelings. His literary experience, that is to say, had enlarged the vocabulary of his emotions, and it assisted him in representing his sufferings to himself and to us. Surely such flexibility and fluency in the naming and understanding of our feelings is one benefit we seek, however unconsciously, from literature. That benefit Cowper had received, and it leaves its mark on his book.

Control of the sort Cowper exercises in his autobiography—control both in the sense of the formal coherence of the whole and the deliberate clarity of particular formulations—is not merely an aesthetic but a moral concern. He insists on understanding his experience. Cowper I have said was terrified of judgment—but the judgment of others, not himself. Or rather, his fear of judgment he understands in his sanity to be the mark of madness. This understanding is a result of his willingness at last to enter into judgment upon himself, to recognize like Bunyan that his hopelessness of grace was itself the sin to which it seemed to be a response. And like Bunyan once again, Cowper insisted that the world make sense. This he did even in his madness. His greediness of conscience, seeking in his past something to convict himself of, expresses several things, no doubt; but one of them is a horror at the apparent senselessness of his sufferings. The notion that he was irrevocably damned, painful although it was, was preferable: it permitted justice, of however harsh a sort, and, with justice, God to exist. I am suggesting among other things that Cowper's conviction that he was damned was, relatively speaking, a comfort to him; once again something in him had preserved him from the worst alternative that offered. His appetite for rationality, as instinctive as the desire of part of himself to resist execution, preserved in being enough of his moral nature to make recovery possible. And recovery took the form of ascribing to God's mercy a reality equal to that of his justice, a reality that, bringing good out of evil, was recompense for Cowper's pain and balanced the moral equation another way.

Or so we may read his story. This much is certain: Cowper's autobiography may be described as an account of the attempt to wrest meaning from the experience of guilt. The passage from madness to sanity, from damnation to blessedness, is the passage from a wrong opinion to a right one about what that meaning is. His book makes clear how mortally dangerous a journey it is. And hence it declares its subject to be a hero—a hero in a sense of the term easier for us to understand than for his contemporaries and himself.

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For this chronicle of suffering is not a chronicle of weakness. It details crisis and collapse; but it ends in victory, of however compromised, limited and ambiguous a sort. Surely it is testimony to the essential strength of the self of a Cowper or a Bunyan that it insists on exploring the regions outside the fold of salvation, refusing the comforts (which at the same time it values and longs for) of faith which it fears will somehow annihilate it. This adventure in insanity is sin; but it is perhaps not a sin easy for us altogether to condemn. As Cowper testifies, it is a sin very like Satan's, in which from Cowper's lifetime until the present many men have found everything to admire. Perhaps it is not quite an accident that the Satanist view of *Paradise Lost* found its voice at the end of the century in which men had been exploring this dangerous territory. In any event, both the Satanists and some of the autobiographers in effect endowed madness—moral madness—with a positive value. Negation and denial were seen to issue from strength. This fact, to be sure, these autobiographers contrived to hide from themselves. They do not quite discern that in some sense their sufferings are a credit to them—and in this there is a kind of modesty that adds to their attractiveness. Cowper's journey into hell, as we have seen, appeared to him a flight from a dreaded judgment. But it had also the positive aspect of a steadfast refusal of a part of himself to accede to injustice. His retreat into madness was in one sense an act of health: it was the tactic by which the part of himself in love with life evaded a voracious conscience whose demands we may only call neurotic. Paradoxically, his madness was in the service of health, like the temporary paralysis of his hands as they clutched the vial of laudanum. A recognition of the deviousness and guile by which we serve ourselves is general now; and it is for this reason that we are better equipped than the writers and first readers of these autobiographies to recognize the heroism of these men, whose strange experiences could only seem to them a mixture of curses and blessings manfully to be endured.

But if what I have called the adventure in insanity is heroic, how can the return from it deserve, as I have said it does, the same praise? Is not this a retreat, and perhaps, if the advance is so admirable, a blameworthy one? Perhaps the first thing to be said is that no man can live forever on the frontiers of experience. As even we who are relatively healthy-minded can testify, the faculties that protected Cowper's sanity by leading him into madness are sometimes strangely inefficient. We dream (we are told) so that we may sleep; but nightmares that wake us are a part of everyone's experience. So, too, the strategies intended to preserve the self may fail or go too far: Cowper's final attempt at suicide almost worked. What I am suggesting here is that the strength of the adventurous, Satanic self, the strength I have been praising, is not only the strength to make the journey but to *survive* it, to carry it through to some purpose. And that purpose is a man's daylight dealings with reality. The voyages out and back are one. And the return, one hopes, is not to the same condition from which one started, but to earned control, a new health. "Of the artist," Lionel Trilling says, "we must say that whatever elements of neurosis he has in common with his fellow mortals, the one part of him that is healthy, by any conceivable definition of health, is that which gives him the power to conceive, to plan, to work, and to bring his work to a conclusion." The power to conceive, to plan, to work, and to bring a work to a conclusion is not the desire of the artist alone but of every man. That power, that health, is what Cowper achieved, achieved by surviving. It was incomplete power, to be sure: Cowper's journey had to be made again. But a victory he did achieve, although a qualified one. In its ambiguity and cost it was a very modern kind of victory. For Cowper was one of what William James calls the "twice-born," the sort of person to whom nowadays we look for moral insight; and in varying degrees of literalness all such persons must say with Cowper that the madhouse was the place of their "second nativity."

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OLD MYTHS AND NEW REALITIES. *By Senator J. W. Fulbright. Random House. $3.95.*

Reviewed by STANLEY HOFFMANN

Senator Fulbright's book, which contains the famous speech delivered by the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee on March 25, 1964, is a fine specimen of the shape that the Liberal approach to international politics is taking currently. It is, as before, based on the notion that peace and war are rooted in human nature and on the belief that statesmen are capable of creating a state of mind in which peace will prevail. It still denounces in the international competition a disastrous inversion of priorities at the expense of social reform. The old faith in common interests among states survives strengthened by the advent of the nuclear age. The old hope for harmony has been replaced by a more sober plea for gradual accommodation in a world in which conflicts cannot be exorcised: in the Senator's view, the cold war can perhaps not be ended, but it can be modified. The former Liberal acceptance of the nation-state as the necessary and proper basic unit in world affairs has been abandoned; Senator Fulbright denounces in nationalism the most dangerous force in world politics and calls for political and economic communities larger than the nation.

There is much in the Senator's analysis of current events that is sound. Even if many of the "myths" he denounces had already been eroded by changes in world affairs and by policies of the past Administration, his plea for "adaptation to complexity" and his advocacy of a more discriminating policy toward the Soviet nations are not superfluous, as the election campaign of 1964 demonstrates. Senator Fulbright's book, however, raises four questions to which the reader finds no satisfactory answer.

In the first place, how much of a guideline for policy does Senator Fulbright actually provide? On issues such as Panama and Cuba, his recommendations are sensible indeed, but on many bigger issues—Vietnam, China, Berlin, the establishment of an Atlantic partnership—his suggestions tend to be extremely vague and tainted by wishful thinking. His chapter on Atlantic partnership is particularly disappointing, for the Senator—who criticizes so vigorously many traditional American illusions in foreign policy—falls into the no less familiar trap of mistaking procedures or institutions for substantive solutions. A major part of the Gaullist challenge, which the Senator denounces, lies in the General's obstinate determination to settle problems of substance first; it is of little help to advocate contractual links between Europe and the United States without specifying far more than is done here the nature of

✪ STANLEY HOFFMANN is professor of government at Harvard University. He has edited *Contemporary Theory in International Relations* and is a coauthor of *In Search of France*. He has been working recently on the problems of European-American relations; he is preparing a study of the limits of United States foreign policy and a book on the Vichy regime.

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those links. Otherwise, all the talk about partnership will only feed often unjustified European suspicions.

In the second place, are the policies recommended by the Senator compatible? To the extent—a very considerable one—to which the cold war was the cement of the Atlantic coalition, and insofar as the incipient *détente* is responsible for the cracks in both camps, is it realistic to advocate both a pursuit of the *détente* and the construction of a tight Atlantic partnership? It is the fear of a direct Soviet-American entente that feeds the clamor for European "independence"; it is the trend toward "polycentrism" that undermines not only the efforts toward Atlantic unity but even the drive toward European integration. In a world increasingly less dominated by the *old* cold war—that is, the Soviet-American confrontation—is the idea of close Atlantic unity progressive or reactionary?

Thirdly, is not Senator Fulbright in some measure a victim of the illusion that a great power ought to be able to arrange its priorities in the most "rational" way—as if the international competition did not exist? It is not only the cold war, it is any major responsibility in world affairs—especially in a revolutionary period—that entails the diversion of resources that the Senator deplores. A great power has to deal with its domestic problems and with its foreign obligations simultaneously. Only the protected nations can afford the happy luxury of domestic priority under someone else's umbrella.

Finally, even if one acknowledges the evils of nationalism and the need to move beyond the nation-state, and especially when one argues that our perceptions ought to stick to objective reality, must one not recognize that there have never been as many nation-states as today, that the competition among them has never been as complex, and that willingness to give up sovereignty is singularly scarce? Of course, this is no reason to give up the effort to lead the world toward a less fragmented state: an accurate analysis of reality does not eliminate the need to improve reality. But it should rule out the tendency to talk and to act *as if* things were already other than what they are and close to what one wants them to be. The Gaullist challenge would not be so forceful if the General did not derive so much strength from his grasp of those facts—more than from the might of France alone. The major obstacle for American foreign policy is not so much the gap between perception and reality, as the gap between desire and reality; the major difficulty lies in turning the world into what the philosophers call a state of peace without at any point forgetting that it is still in a state of war. A timid *détente,* a conditional and fragile change of attitudes in the old cold war are hopeful signs, but an improvement in some of the manners of the state of war is not tantamount to a global armistice.

I have written to keep the curious out of the secret places of my mind.
—from a Frost letter to Sidney Cox

SELECTED LETTERS OF ROBERT FROST. *Edited by Lawrance Thompson. Holt, Rinehart & Winston. $10.*

Reviewed by WILLIAM MEREDITH

I have kept hidden in the instep arch
Of an old cedar at the waterside
A broken drinking goblet like the Grail
Under a spell so the wrong ones can't find it,
So can't get saved, as Saint Mark says they mustn't.

"Directive"

Frost has always given the Wrong Ones a hard time, and this book will only help them damn themselves deeper. He disliked the word compassion, which seemed to stain both giver and taker with crocodile tears, and he liked the word magnanimity, which assumes infinite spirit in the giver and leaves the taker free to put his own price on himself. The wrong ones, as far as his letters and poems are concerned, are those who will

✪ WILLIAM MEREDITH, who recently published a translation of Apollinaire's *Alcools,* is the author of four books of poems, the latest of which is *The Wreck of the Thresher and Other Poems.* He teaches at Connecticut College.

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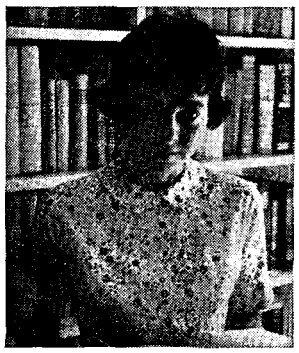

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not see what he's up to, having their own preconceptions about what he ought to be up to. The letters are like the poems in this: as straightforward as they seem, one by one, they add up to a Masonic mystification. Like the poems, they will mean a lot to the initiate.

They are based on a single secret, which is Frost's identity. He discovered it early, wrestled with it for a lifetime, lived mercilessly to bring it off. It is not a twentieth-century identity and we are not easy with it. What these letters show is how early and with what certainty Frost knew that he was to exist on the scale of Emerson and Browning and Hardy. He accepted this bigness and took it to mean he was not to traffic with poets or poetry smaller than himself. He remained in doubt—as probably he had to if he was to go on risking big poems into his eighties—as to how successful he had been. But he seldom doubted the *scale* on which he would succeed or fail. He disguised his identity by humility and vanity—more humility at first, more vanity toward the end—but it seems clear from the letters that there was never an intimacy between Frost and anyone who didn't sense how grandiose his claim that "the work is play for mortal stakes."

Of the themes that run through the letters none is more insistent than his sense of himself. At the age of twelve he wrote (and this mustn't of course be taken too seriously, but isn't it just the old Frost?): "There are not many girls I like but when I like them I fall dead in love with them and there are not many I like just because I can have some fun with them like I can Lida but I like you because I can't help myself and when I get mad at you I feel mad at myself to." At twenty he writes to the editor who had bought "My Butterfly": "that poem exaggerates my ability. . . . Do not think this artifice or excess of modesty, though, for to betray myself utterly, such an one am I that even in my failures I find all the promise I require to justify the astonishing magnitude of my ambition," and: "I am learning how to spell. I am learning to write better poetry. It is only a matter of time now when I shall throw off the mask and declare for literateur mean it proverty or riches."

Declare for literateur he never did, in the sense that other poets of his time and soon after did. Is it wrong to say of Pound, Eliot, Stevens—everyone else in fact except Yeats—that they played for smaller stakes than Frost, to the extent that they played in the terms of a literary world? Instinctively he kept apart from writers of anywhere near his own stature, and if pride was a motive it seems to have worked in conjunction with other, sounder instincts.

The know-nothing pose was the one that threw most Wrong Ones off-balance. Seen in the letters and in the light of Frost's ambition, this was simply a way of getting shut of a particular provincialism: the provincialism of people who withdraw from a vulgar world into intellectual or artistic concerns. "The beauty of such things as Into My Own, My November Guest, A Dream Pang, Mowing and Reluctance," he wrote in 1913 after *A Boy's Will* came out, "is that they are not just postgraduate work . . . *but the unforced expression of a life I was forced to live.*"

Throughout the letters of this period Frost is feeling out his particular genius as a poet and getting it right. The theory behind his work is strikingly set forth in the several prefaces to his own and other people's work that he published in later years, but it is perfectly consistent with these early letters. At thirty-nine he had written to John Bartlett, a former student: "I alone of English writers have consciously set myself to make music out of what I may call the sound of sense. . . . An ear and an appetite for these sounds of sense is the first qualification of a writer, be it of prose or verse. But if one is to be a poet he must learn to get cadences by skillfully breaking the sounds of sense with all their irregularity of accent across the regular beat of the metre." He had been doing it, too.

As a man, biographical and autobiographical, Frost is like Joyce or Yeats: one either likes or dislikes him strongly, but this judgment can be easily dissociated

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from the work, which is of course the real and enduring personality. I can't help feeling that the Wrong Ones are missing a lot, but the poems are a good deal more magnanimous than the man ever was to his enemies.

It remains to be said that Lawrance Thompson, who had a long, honest, stormy friendship with Frost, has shown great understanding of the letters. He has chosen them "with an eye to providing the most complete portrait of the man, his work, and his life." They are supported by valuable introductions to the natural divisions of the career and by a brilliant index of ideas incorporated in the regular index. The book makes one look forward to Mr. Thompson's biography, the first one we will have in contemporary English, and to the selected prose of Robert Frost which his publishers promise in the meantime.

Overhaul and Reform

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE. *By Louis W. Koenig. Harcourt, Brace & World. $8.*

Reviewed by FRANK FREIDEL

Is the American Presidency as an institution adequately equipped to meet the weighty responsibilities of the 1960's? Decidedly not, Louis W. Koenig asserts in this lively, thought-provoking study. Marshaling anecdotes and illustrative evidence ranging from the administrations of George Washington into that of Lyndon B. Johnson, he dissects the Presidency, from its historic past into its troublesome present, and sets forth striking recommendations for the future. Seldom is a book so erudite yet readable.

Like another recent critic of Federal sluggishness, James MacGregor Burns, Professor Koenig decries as the overwhelming obstacle the relative stalemate that a hand-

✪ FRANK FREIDEL, professor of American history at Harvard University since 1955, is the author of *America in the Twentieth Century*. He is at present writing the fourth volume of a biography of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

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ful of the members of Congress can impose, what President John F. Kennedy complained of as the silent filibuster. His basic solution, which he vigorously advocates from cover to cover, is the strengthening of the powers of the chief executive. In no other way, he argues, can the government meet the slow amassing of critical internal difficulties, especially in the growing cities, and the complex, incessant challenges from without. The checks and balances imposed by the Founding Fathers in a more leisurely, secure age, and accruing in the intervening generations, vest the forces of conservatism, or at best inertia, in both the Congress and the Federal bureaucracy with a sharp advantage over the forces pressing for modernization.

A considerable proportion of the solutions that Koenig suggests are, as he grants, unattainable now and in the foreseeable future. In consequence, the largest question he leaves in the mind of a sympathetic reader is whether or not the executive branch of the government can be sufficiently renovated in time to prevent the nation from falling behind disastrously in coping with "the three great revolutions of our time": "the human rights revolution, the automation revolution, and the weaponry revolution." In his concluding chapter he contrasts favorably the American government despite its shortcomings with that of other leading nations, especially England with its frequently idealized parliamentary system. He demonstrates how inadequate the English system, so salutary in the nineteenth century, has become to keep Britain abreast of the modern world. Will the same lament be made of the American system in the twenty-first century?

At the outset, Koenig declares, the process of selection of the President should be overhauled. There he is on familiar ground, suggesting that the Electoral College be abolished to prevent defections by electors and that the proposal to select a President by national popular vote be reviewed periodically until acceptable. Continuation of the present system might well lead to the election of minority presidents, and several suggested compromise reforms

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of the Electoral College could result in worse evils than those now existing. As for tenure, the no-third-term amendment enacted as a posthumous censure of Franklin D. Roosevelt should be repealed. It weakened President Eisenhower in his second four years, and is anti-democratic since it limits the choice of voters. The Presidential succession also should be changed to permit the President himself to choose a new Vice President when one is needed. There are also ways in which the President should be strengthened as a party leader.

At the crux of the problem are the relations of the President with Congress. "Congress's internal organization and processes constitute a vast terrain of booby traps for the Presidential program," Koenig observes. "The standing committees and their chairmen, the negative power of the House Rules Committee, and the Senatorial filibuster are all potential occasions of disaster for the President." Of course, this can be true only when a strong President is fighting to enact a positive program as, for example, President Kennedy. During the Republican administration of Dwight D. Eisenhower, who took a more limited view of his office, the energetic Senate Majority Leader, Lyndon B. Johnson, a Democrat, commented, "We prod him into doing everything we can get him to do, and when he does something good we give him a 21-gun salute."

How should men like Johnson as President have their hands strengthened? They should be able to reject "riders" through vetoing individual items in appropriation bills (a power Jefferson Davis enjoyed as President of the Confederacy). Especially they should be aided by means of a thoroughgoing overhaul of Congress, since as Senator Case has declared, it is the President "who most needs Congressional reform." Koenig goes so far as to suggest that the President and both houses of Congress be elected simultaneously for a four-year term.

One of the most original sections of the book examines the President as an administrator and delineates his difficulties in coping with the departments. "The single most powerful figure in the great [bureaucratic]

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pyramid," Koenig believes, "is the bureau chief, who in many subtle ways can frustrate the President's purposes when they diverge from his own." By creating an array of New Deal agencies, Franklin D. Roosevelt sidetracked the entrenched bureaucracy and functioned through an administration responsive to his policies. Subsequent Presidents have lacked this opportunity. Neither can a present-day President resort successfully to Roosevelt's freewheeling albeit effective techniques of creating overlapping lines of authority and stimulating rivalries. What he needs most is to be liberated from incessant Congressional intervention and even domination in the administrative branch of the government.

Altogether the dimensions of the task that Koenig recommends to the American people are discouragingly large, but he is hopeful that pressures that are building at present will lead to its achievement. It can be attained, he points out, "within the contours of the Constitution and the nation's tradition." It should be added that the American tradition has always been one of national growth accompanied by slow but constructive governmental change.

Yeats Upon the Rood of Time

SWAN AND SHADOW: Yeats's Dialogue with History. *Thomas R. Whitaker. University of North Carolina Press. $7.50.*

Reviewed by ROBERT SCHOLES

We are beginning, now, to sense that Yeats is not merely, as Richard Ellmann styled him, "the dominant poet of our time" but the dominant lyric poet of all English literature, the very Shakespeare of lyricism.

✪ Associate professor of English at the State University of Iowa, ROBERT SCHOLES's essays on modern literature have appeared in many journals. He is editor of two volumes of modern literary criticism and is presently working with Richard M. Kain on a study of backgrounds and sources for Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man,* to be published by the Northwestern University Press.

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In the rich amber of such a reputation many critical and scholarly flies will inevitably seek their academic immortality. And such a process will no doubt have its sordid side. Unnecessary books will be written, bibliographed, and laid to rest safely in the stacks of our great libraries, unread save by those harmless drudges who must read them—graduate students and book reviewers. But great literature just as inevitably provokes impressive critical performances, providing, as it does, both the impetus and the material for extraordinary efforts of the critical mind.

Thomas Whitaker's study of Yeats is a work of this latter sort—indeed it is a model of its kind, typical of the best work being produced by that newer generation of critics who have assimilated the close-reading techniques of the old New Criticism and have wedded to that admirable concentration on the object a comparable zeal for relevant learning. If it were not apparent already, Mr. Whitaker's book would amply demonstrate that this is the best approach to Yeats. In a sense he continues work begun by Richard Ellmann in *Yeats, The Man and the Masks.* But where Ellmann sought to relate a broad range of Yeats's experience, personal and literary, to the poetry, Whitaker has narrowed and deepened the focus to an intense consideration of one crucial connecting link between the poet's mind and art—Yeats's view of history.

Mr. Whitaker's thesis is a complex one, but it may be roughly summarized as follows: History impinges on Yeats and his poetry in two ways—through the poet's early and continuing interest in historical patterns (cycles, gyres, phases), and through his personal experience as an individual actor upon the stage of history. Yeats's development as a poet is reflected in his rec-

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onciliation of these two ways. "In early life Yeats saw only the rather tenuous and abstract connections between the larger pattern of history and his own personal experience. Many years later came those vivid moments in which both were in full focus, moments that transformed his thought into a poetic whole." At first there was "a decided cleavage between Yeats's world of vision and his world of dramatic experience. Only gradually did the two perspectives merge to enable him to present full-bodied dramatic visions of the tragedy of the eternal imagination crucified on the rood of time."

This thesis is reflected in the organization of the book. It is divided into two parts: "History as Vision" and "History as Dramatic Experience." Much of the second part is concerned with explication of individual poems, illustrative of the combined panoramic and personal vision in the later Yeats. The thesis calls for this, and Mr. Whitaker's talent as an explicator is everywhere in evidence, but for this reviewer Part Two is less stimulating, less fruitful, less broadly relevant than Part One. The quality of the critic's achievement in the first part may be suggested by a consideration of one chapter from that section: "The Apocalypse." Because that era of our literary history, which we shall no doubt learn to call "The Age of Yeats," is characterized by intimations of apocalypse, Mr. Whitaker's discussion of the apocalyptic aspects of Yeats's thought inevitably gives a shape and meaning to a significant aspect of the entire period. Similarly, his treatment of the poet's early "apocalyptic" or "alchemical" romances (both adjectives are his and both illuminating) will have reverberations that extend beyond his immediate subject. In effect his presentation of Yeats's nonrealistic fiction as a richly meaningful fabric of symbolic narrative amounts to a convincing justification of allegory (although he carefully avoids the word) as a modern literary device. The implications of this for critics who favor a generic approach to literature are manifold. Here Mr. Whitaker shares in a whole movement of modern criticism which seems

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to be effecting a rehabilitation of romance as an esteemed narrative form.

As a whole, this book does more than its title seems to promise. It is not an introductory work nor a handbook. It is aimed at readers who already know their Yeats and want to deepen and enrich their knowledge. But neither is it a circumscribed academic exercise. Mr. Whitaker's approach to literary art through the artist's concept of history is one that should work well for many of the writers of the last century and a half—an age characterized by its historical self-awareness. One hopes that other studies of this kind will be undertaken, although only in a most optimistic moment does it seem likely that, once undertaken, they might be done as well as this one. The thoroughness and vigor with which Thomas Whitaker has pursued his task, and the intelligence which led him to perceive it, combine to make this, in all senses of the word, an exemplary work.

A Man Possessed

COLD FRIDAY. *By Whittaker Chambers. Random House. $5.95.*

Reviewed by WALTER GOODMAN

Cold Friday takes its name from a high field on Whittaker Chambers' farm in Maryland, where Chambers would stand and survey the country around and reflect on his own life and on the life of the West. It is a good title—the week is nearly at an end and the weather is bitter.

Chambers' reflections, in the form of articles, letters, diary entries and reminiscences, have been skillfully brought together by his friend, Duncan Norton-Taylor, managing editor of *Fortune*. Written between 1952, when Chambers suffered the first of a series of heart attacks, and his death in 1961, this book (which contains only passing reference to the Hiss case) is heavy with the premonition of doom. It was evident from his autobiography, *Witness,* that Chambers thought of himself as a key symbol in the "crisis of the West"; now, with his health broken and death a constant presence, it is as though he and the civilization he loathes are gasping out their lives together. He savors the allegory of himself —as time closes in on him, so history is closing in on the rest of us.

Cold Friday is in the main an exceedingly well-written book—marred only by a weakness for the portentous: "It is the battle for the world that is approaching showdown." (Now and then, this adds a touch of humor to a not very humorous volume. Chambers tells us in one essay that his son "was walking toward one of the invisible divides of our time, and must walk it alone." Where was he going? "He was driving to Westminster, Maryland, to register with his draft board.") The passages where Chambers speaks of his family and his farm are often moving; his recollections of Columbia University and Europe just after World War I are perceptive; with some borrowing from Dostoevski, he gives an evocative description of the Russian mystique. He proclaims his faith and his despair with equal eloquence, and he has a brilliant flair for drama.

None of this should surprise us. Despite the political notoriety of the Hiss case, Whittaker Chambers was from first to last a literary man. He saw politics not as a battle of ideas or even of human beings, but of immense forces, played out on an epic screen. What drew him to Communism in the Twenties was not Marx, but Hauptmann, Ibsen, Gorky, not the actual plight of the working stiff, but the blazing dream of revolution in which a rotten West would be annihilated. What sustained him during his years in the Party and in the underground were the heroic commitments, the sacrifices, the exhilaration of conspiracy. (On the evidence of *Witness,* the Communists' efforts at intrigue owed less to Karl Marx than to Harpo—but intrigue it undoubtedly was.) And when he fled the Party in 1938, in revulsion at the cruelty and hy-

WALTER GOODMAN's most recent book is *All Honorable Men.* His articles on politics and current affairs have appeared in *Commentary,* the *New Republic,* the *Nation* and other publications.

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pocrisy of the Stalinists and their apologists in this country, he took with him two cherished possessions: a sense of ubiquitous peril and a vision of the Apocalypse. He also took God, with whom he had recently become reacquainted.

He was exasperated by those who followed the Hiss case as a kind of tennis match between two professionals. For him it was the Force of History, represented by Alger Hiss in alliance with the greatest powers of the land, against one lone figure, Whittaker Chambers, who was sacrificing a fine career, a good name and the family peace that he had belatedly achieved in a hopeless effort to show a blind, corrupt, ungrateful, irreligious nation how deep its infection went. Chambers suffered greatly during the Hiss case, but there was some satisfaction to be taken from his sufferings: they were proof of what he most fervently believed—that the West had been betrayed and was doomed and that he, atoning, was the unhonored prophet of the age. (What could he reply when all Joe McCarthy found to say to him after that ordeal was that he supposed *Witness* must have made some money?)

Chambers' literary bent is plainly visible in the way he views the history of our time and the destiny of our civilization—major themes of *Cold Friday*. The critical hour, he reports, after which there was no turning back, came when men transferred their faith from God to the machine. But this new faith was unsatisfying; who, after all, would give up his life for a gasoline engine, or even for a whole car? A vacuum had been created in men's souls, and into it surged the revolutionary forces of the century, proclaiming a godless faith for which men *would* be willing to die. The flabby, materialistic West could not withstand such a movement, and for the past fifty years, we have been afflicted by various forms of this dynamic revolutionary atheism—Russian Communism, Italian Fascism, British Socialism, the American New Deal. All, in Chambers' system, stem from the same impulse and are moving toward the same authoritarian goal. The fitting end of the West will be its demolition by a product of

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its own technology, the hydrogen bomb. One may shrug or smile at all this as history or as political philosophy, but it's keen drama.

What decisively separates Whittaker Chambers from the easygoing temper of the democratic West, I think he would have agreed, is his belief that we urgently need a faith for which men are willing to die—a "rallying idea . . . capable of being grasped and so overmastering millions of men. . . ." He is saddened by the contemporary disinclination to get killed: "What the age needs is less mind than martyrs." He holds aloft *Revelation*: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." By such a code, Chambers was right when he became a Communist; he was right when he broke with Communism; he has always been right. The pitiable ones are those—the dumb majority and the lukewarm liberals frolicking in "the poisonous puddles of the intellectuals"—who gave themselves neither to God nor to revolution.

Now, of course, Whittaker Chambers was not the first hot American, nor the last, although he gives signs of believing he was the only authentic specimen around at the time. We have always had them with us. Before we were a nation, the churches of New England were fortresses where preachers of Enthusiasm tried to stave off preachers of the Enlightenment. The Enthusiasts lost, and they have lost many other engagements during these two hundred years, but, as any newspaper reader must have noticed, their spirit has never been entirely subdued. Its reappearance is generally accompanied by repression, brutality and howlings in the night. It is also accompanied, often as not, by religious banners.

Whittaker Chambers was a peaceable, reflective, solitary man, afflicted by nightmares, some of which were real and some of which were real mainly to him. Although he was taken with the idea that he was virtually alone in this hemisphere in understanding Communism, he did not delude himself that he had anything to offer in the way of a practical program to save us from it—he was never at home with the orthodoxies of the *National Review*. As the pain and bitterness of the Hiss case wore off, he began to look on the world with a somewhat more lenient eye. He never stopped believing that Communism is an implacable and immutable force, but he recognized that Communists are men, after all, who change as conditions change and, indeed, may even change some of the conditions; unfortunately, he does not, in this book at least, try to reconcile this understanding with his more imposing concepts. If his predictions of destruction still seem overwrought, who is so foolhardy as to laugh them away?

Chambers' honesty and his talent warrant him a closer hearing than most of the apostate Communists—but his life was dominated by a steaming imagination, and it was his imagination that conceived his world view and produced his call for martyrs. Granted, the heirs of the Enlightenment made the hydrogen bomb possible, but the Enthusiasts are the ones who rattle it. Whether we shall somehow manage to get by without being blown up or sinking beneath the totalitarian heel is a moot point; but we are in trouble indeed if we must depend for our survival on fatalism about the Force of History, nostalgia for a medieval order, oracles of catastrophe, fantasies of martyrdom or the spiritual redemption of men for whom other gods have failed.

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The Reader Replies . . . . . .

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—EDITOR

Many thanks for the current issue [AS: Autumn, 1964] with the special arts section. I have enjoyed much of it, particularly Mr. Fried's burlesque of contemporary art theology. He shows a more accurate ear for this sort of thing and a keener sense of just where the idiocy lies than any I've encountered in months. The piece is almost in a class with Richard Rovere's Establishment piece you published a few years back.

FRANK GETLEIN
Vienna, Virginia

* * *

Congratulations on your current issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR. Your section on the arts is wonderful; you really found some original young writers who are in the thick of things themselves. I particularly liked the pieces by Brock Brower and Joan Didion (I'm in the middle of Miss Didion's book, *Run River*) and my musician husband was very interested by Peter Davies' article.

I was pleased to see Robert Watson had included The Poetry Center in his biography, and thanks for having it in! Jean Valentine is reading here this fall—you've got a scoop in publishing her.

GALEN EBERL
The Poetry Center, New York

* * *

In the Winter, 1963-64 issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR John N. Morris makes some startling statements about the relevance of *Paradise Lost* to the present day. He apparently feels that we should read the poem today for one reason only: because it tells us that bliss and innocence do not consist in sexlessness, but in pure and full sexuality; that Milton's message to us is a justification and glorification of sexuality, no more and no less.

Is this true? Have we repeated Adam's folly and lost Paradise again? Even though Milton may speak the truth (as Mr. Morris admits), have we stopped listening to most of what he has to say? What do other Milton critics think?

Rex Warner finds Milton's view of the ideal husband-wife relationship—"Hee for God only, shee for God in him"—offensive to some modern tastes. J. H. Hanford concludes that Meredith's sonnet "Lucifer in Starlight," with its acceptance of the ethical order of *Paradise Lost* but its silence regarding any providential order, is as much as the modern mind can salvage of Milton's cosmic thought; he judges Milton "truly of the past," "humanly in error," and "capable of misleading if he leads at all." E. E. Stoll hands down the verdict that Eternity did not hang over Milton's eyes as it does over ours today, that Milton was incapable of our "dissolving visions, symbolic, troubled meditations," that he was "a reformer, a warrior . . . of the seventeenth century, not of ours." And finally, a London *Times* literary critic, discussing some recent publications on Milton, remarks that anyone reading *Paradise Lost* today "is almost inevitably reminded of William Blake and D. H. Lawrence," that "although Milton and Lawrence differ about almost everything, they are akin in believing that sex is central and noble and capable of a kind of perfection."

These critics seem to support Mr. Morris' contention that all we can use of *Paradise Lost* today is its sexual credo. While it is true that the literature of the past must be rediscovered by each succeeding generation in terms of its own experiences and needs, is this all that is left us today of *Paradise Lost*? Has Milton no more to say to us than to extol and justify sexual pleasures, innocent and wholesome as they may be? Before we heed the voice of the anti-providential serpent and eat the apple of Freudian rationalization, we should reconsider Mr. Morris' declarations.

To be told flatly that "we have attempted to contrive a world in which the fool shall not suffer for his folly" is startling, but to hear in the same breath "That is absolutely as it should be, I am sure" is astounding. Even if we accept

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the first statement—and I for one do not—it is unthinkable to accept the second. But even more questionable are Mr. Morris' confident dicta that "most of us" consider the universe indifferent to us, find the idea of personal accountability for our acts foreign, and—most disturbing of all—that *Paradise Lost* is one of the few remaining factors evoking belief in us.

Mr. Morris does an injustice both to Milton and to us when he pinpoints the goodness of sexuality as the central truth and meaning of *Paradise Lost,* then cancels out the rest of the poem as obsolete, foreign, disastrous, irrelevant and inapplicable to twentieth-century man. The basic doctrines of all orthodox Christian creeds still reflect the theological and ethical concepts embodied in *Paradise Lost.* Indeed, most non-Christian readers and critics—and Mr. Morris implies by his conclusions that "most of us" today belong in this category—would find difficulty in evolving such a limited interpretation of Milton's epic as Mr. Morris has done, and the assumptions he makes are completely untenable to Christians.

There are still many people, I am sure, to whom the literary as well as the theological significance of *Paradise Lost* lies in its comment on the problem of good and evil, providence, and personal reward and punishment—in short, individual responsibility and accountability to a Supreme Being—rather than in its attitudes toward sex. Many of us have not tried to create the sort of world Mr. Morris envisions nor do we feel that it is "absolutely as it should be," nor do we find *Paradise Lost,* noble and beautiful as it is, an isolated occasion for belief. Many of us are still at ease with the poem's main ideas. We do not squirm at the thought that certain actions may have unpleasant consequences, because we have also the notion that certain other actions may have pleasant consequences. We have not all rationalized reality or renounced our faith. Obviously, if there was a Providence three hundred years ago, there is still a Providence today.

Critics, as well as ordinary readers, cannot—dare not—"rediscover" the literature of another age by distorting or ignoring its principal theme and commentary in a Procrustes-like attempt to fit them into a particular philosophy, or lack of philosophy, that may be in vogue when they read it. We must either take Milton whole—Paradise, heaven, hell, God, Satan, angels, Providence and the rest—or refrain from contemplating him altogether.

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